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THE WORKS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

VOL. VIII.

Engraved by Jos. Andrews.

MRS. FRANKLIN.

FROM AN ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE POSSESSION
OF PROFESSOR HODGE.

THE WORKS OF

Benjamin Franklin

CONTAINING SEVERAL POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL TRACTS NOT INCLUDED IN ANY FORMER EDITION, AND MANY LETTERS OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE NOT HITHERTO PUBLISHED

WITH NOTES AND A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

BY JARED SPARKS

VOLUME VIII.

CHICAGO:
TOWNSEND MAC COUN.
LONDON: B. F. STEVENS.
1882.

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OF

VOLUME EIGHTH.

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CORRESPONDENCE,

PART SECOND;

COMPRISING

LETTERS, PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL,

FROM

THE TIME OF THE AUTHOR'S FIRST MISSION TO ENGLAND

TO

THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

1757 — 1775.

(CONTINUED)

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO JOHN FOXCROFT.

Agency in procuring Walpole's Grant. — Postoffice.

London, 4 February, 1772.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have written two or three small letters to you since my return from Ireland and Scotland. Mr. Todd has not yet shown me that, which you wrote to him about the New Colony, though he mentioned it, and will let me see it, I suppose, when I call on him.* I told you in one of mine, that he has advanced for your share what has been paid by others, though I was ready to do it, and shall in the whole affair take the same care of your interest as of my own.

You take notice, that "Mr. Wharton's friends will not allow me *any merit* in this transaction, but insist *the whole* is owing to his superior abilities." It is a common error in friends, when they would extol their friend, to make comparisons, and to depreciate the merits of others. It was not necessary for his friends to do so in this case. Mr. Wharton will in truth have a good deal of merit in the affair if it succeeds, he having been exceedingly active and industrious in

* See the particulars about this New Colony, Vol. IV. pp. 233, 302.

soliciting it, and in drawing up memorials and papers to support the application and remove objections. But, though I have not been equally active, it not being thought proper, that I should appear much in the solicitation, since I became a little obnoxious to the ministry, on account of my letters to America, yet I suppose my advice may have been thought of some use, since it has been asked on every step, and I believe, that, being longer and better known here than Mr. Wharton, I may have lent some weight to his negotiations by joining in the affair, from the greater confidence men are apt to place in one they know, than in a stranger. However, as I neither ask nor expect any particular consideration for any service I may have done, and only think I ought to escape censure, I shall not enlarge on this invidious topic.

Let us all do our endeavours, in our several capacities, for the common service; and, if one has the ability or opportunity of doing more for his friends than another, let him think that a happiness, and be satisfied. The business is not yet quite completed; and, as many things may happen between the cup and the lip, perhaps there may be nothing of this kind for friends to dispute about. For, if nobody should receive any benefit, there would be no scrambling for the honor.

In yours from New York, of July 3d, you mentioned your intention of purchasing a bill to send hither, as soon as you returned home from your journey. I have not since received any from you, which I only take notice of, that, if you have sent any, you may not blame me for not acknowledging the receipt of it.

In mine of April 20th, I explained to you what I had before mentioned, that, in settling our private accounts, I had paid you the sum of three hundred

and eighty-nine pounds, or thereabouts, in my own wrong, having before paid it for you to the general postoffice. I hope that since you have received your books, and looked over the accounts, you are satisfied of this. I am anxious for your answer upon it, the sum being too large to be left long without an adjustment. I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO CADWALLADER EVANS.

Silk produced in Pennsylvania, and sent to England for a Bounty.

London, 6 February, 1772.

Dear Doctor,

The trunks of silk were detained at the custom-house till very lately; first, because of the holidays, and then waiting to get two persons, skilful in silk, to make a valuation of it, in order to ascertain the bounty. As soon as that was done, and the trunks brought to my house, I waited on Dr. Fothergill to request he would come and see it opened, and consult about disposing of it, which he could not do till last Thursday. On examining it, we found that the valuers had opened all the parcels, in order, we suppose, to see the quality of each, had neglected to make them up again, and the directions and marks were lost, (except that from Mr. Parke, and that of the second crop,) so that we could not find which was intended for the Queen, and which for the Proprietary family. Then, being no judges ourselves, we concluded to get Mr. Patterson or some other skilful person, to come and pick out six pounds of the best for her Majesty, and four pounds for each of the other ladies. This I have

endeavoured, but it is not yet done, though I hourly expect it.

Mr. Boydell, broker for the ship, attended the customhouse to obtain the valuation, and had a great deal of trouble to get it managed. I have not since seen him, nor heard the sum they reported, but hope to give you all the particulars by the next ship, which I understand sails in about a fortnight, when Dr. Fothergill and myself are to write a joint letter to the committee, to whom please to present my respects, and assure them of my most faithful services. I am charmed with the sight of such a quantity the second year, and have great hopes the produce will now be established. The second crop silk seems to me not inferior to the others; and, if it is practicable with us to have two crops, and the second season does not interfere too much with other business in the farming way, I think it will be a great addition to the profits, as well as to the quantity.

Dr. Fothergill has a number of Chinese drawings, of which some represent the process of raising silk, from the beginning to the end. I am to call at his house and assist in looking them out, he intending to send them as a present to the Silk Company. I have now only time to add, that I am ever, yours very affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.*

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* On the same subject he subsequently wrote the following short notes to Dr. Evans.

"*London*, 5 *May*, 1772. — You write, that, besides what was sent here, fifty-four pounds had been reeled at the filature of private persons, who are getting it manufactured into mitts, stockings, and stuffs. This gives me great pleasure to hear; and I hope that practice will be rather followed, than the sending small parcels to be manufactured here, which are difficult to get done, where all goes on in the great way. Let nothing discourage you. Perseverance will conquer all dif-

FROM DAVID HUME TO B. FRANKLIN.

On the Prejudices against his Writings.

Edinburgh, 7 February, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

I was very glad to hear of your safe arrival in London, after being exposed to as many perils as St. Paul, by land and by water, though to no perils among false brethren; for the good wishes of all your brother philosophers in this place, attend you heartily and sin-

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ficulties; and the contributors will have the glorious satisfaction of having procured an inestimable advantage to their country."

"*London*, 3 *June*, 1772.—I have at length purchased Stringfellow's right for you, or for you and Mr. James, as you settle it between you. As it was he that immediately recommended the business to me, I have sent the writings to him by this packet. The rights cost £110, and the charges were £5 15 6. There is a letter of the Proprietary to Mr. Tilghman, which it is supposed will remove all difficulties in the office, and I hope the purchase will prove advantageous. Be so good as to acquaint the Silk Committee, to whom I wrote fully by the last packet, that I have since received the bounty from Boydell the broker. The whole sum from government was £35 19 6; the charges were £5 11 6; so the net sum received by me was £30 8 0. This, with the £121 5 0, which I am to receive on the 10th instant, will make the whole £152 13 0, subject to the orders of the Committee."

"*London*, 2 *December*, 1772.—I received your favor of October 21st, with the bill enclosed, drawn on me by order of the managers for promoting the culture of silk, for £152 0 9, in favor of James & Drinker and yourself, and am glad the purchase I made was satisfactory. As this sum exceeds my disbursement, the overplus will wait your orders; and particularly I wish to have directions what I am to pay Mr. Wheeler for his diligence and trouble in the transaction, which really was considerable."

In a letter to his wife he says; "The Silk Committee were so good as to make me a present of four pounds of raw silk. I have had it worked up, with some addition of the same kind of silk, into a French grey *ducape*, which is a fashionable color, either for old or young women. I therefore send it as a present to you and Sally, understanding there is enough to make each of you a *negligée*. If you should rather incline to sell it, it is valued here at six shillings and sixpence a yard; but I hope you will wear it."—*July* 15*th*, 1773.

cerely, together with much regret that your business would not allow you to pass more time among them.

Brother Lin expects to see you soon, before he takes his little trip round the world. You have heard, no doubt, of that project. The circumstances of the affair could not be more honorable for him, nor could the honor be conferred on one, who deserves it more.

I really believe, with the French author of whom you have favored me with an extract, that the circumstance of my being a Scotchman has been a considerable objection to me. So factious is this country! I expected, in entering on my literary course, that all the Christians, all the whigs, and all the tories, should be my enemies. But it is hard that all the English, Irish, and Welsh, should be also against me. The Scotch likewise cannot be much my friends, as no man is a prophet in his own country. However, it is some consolation that I can bear up my head under all this prejudice. I fancy that I must have recourse to America for justice. You told me, I think, that your countrymen in that part of the world intended to do me the honor of giving an edition of my writings, and you promised that you should recommend to them to follow the last edition, which is in the press. I now use the freedom of reminding you of it.

Pray make my compliments to Sir John Pringle, and tell him how much I wish for his company; and be so good as to give him a description of the house I reserve for him in this Square. If you really go over to America, we hope you will not grudge us Sir John as a legacy. I am, dear Sir, with great truth and regard, your most obedient humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Little done in Parliament relating to America. — Lord Hillsborough. — Agents in England unnecessary, unless received on a different Footing.

London, 13 April, 1772.

Sir,

I wrote to you in January last a long letter, by Meyrick, and at the same time wrote to the Committee, since which I have received no line from any one in Boston, nor has Mr. Bollan yet received the answer we wait for, respecting the eastern settlements on the crown land.

The Parliament has been employed in the royal marriage bill, and other business; nothing of importance relating to America has been mentioned hitherto during the session, and it is thought that India affairs will fill up the remainder of the time, to the prorogation. I have not met with Lord Hillsborough since my return from Ireland, seeing no use at present in attending his levees. The papers mentioned his intention of moving something in the House of Lords relating to America, but I cannot learn there was any truth in it.

It is my present purpose to return home this summer, in which case, I suppose I am to leave your business and papers in the hands of Mr. Lee, which I shall do, if I do not receive other directions.

Upon the present plan here of admitting no agent, but such as governors shall approve of, from year to year, and of course none but such as the ministry approves of, I do not conceive that agents can be of much use to you; and, therefore, I suppose you would rather decline appointing any. In my opinion, they

have at all times been of full as much service to government here, as to the colonies from whence they come, and might still be so, if properly attended to, in preventing, by their better information, those disgraceful blunders of government, that arise from its ignorance of our situation, circumstances, abilities, temper, &c., such as the Stamp Act, which too would have been prevented, if the agents had been regarded. Therefore I should think, that, if agents can be allowed here on no other footing than is now proposed, we should omit sending any, and leave the crown, when it wants our aids, or would transact business with us, to send its minister to the colonies.

Be pleased to present my respects to the Committee, and duty to the Assembly, and believe me, with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN.

London, 5 May, 1772.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I received your kind letter of March 2d, and am glad to hear that the ship from Ireland is got safe into Antigua. I hope you will now get the little token I sent you from thence. I have not received the letter you mention to have given the young Scotchman, nor that from Mr. Craige.

I am sorry for the disorder that has fallen on our friend Kinnersley, but hope he will get the better of it. I thank you for your advice about putting back a fit of the gout. I shall never attempt such a thing. Indeed I have not much occasion to complain of the gout, having had but two slight fits since I came last to England. I hope Mr. Bache is with you and his

family by this time, as he sailed from the Downs the latter end of February. My love to him and Sally, and young master, who, I suppose, is master of the house. Tell him, that Billy Hewson is as much thought of here as he can be there; was weaned last Saturday; loves music; comes to see his grandmother; and will be lifted up to knock at the door himself, as he has done while I was writing this at the request of Mrs. Stevenson, who sends her love, as Sally does her duty. Thanks to God, I continue well, and am, as ever, your affectionate husband,

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN.

Journey to the North of England.

London, 14 July, 1772.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I am just returned from a journey of near a month, which has given a new spring to my health and spirits. I did not get home in time to write by Osborne, but shall write fully to my friends in general by Captain All, who sails about the end of the week.

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* He wrote the same day to another correspondent; "The session of Parliament has been a quiet one, and now draws near a conclusion. Opposition has made no figure, and Lord North manages ably. Peace is negotiating between the Turks and Russians; and miserable Poland is in a fair way of being pacified too, if the entrance of more standing armies into it can produce peace. There is no appearance of any other war likely to arise in Europe, and thence a prospect of lessening considerably the national debt. I continue well. Sir John Pringle has proposed to me a journey for this summer to Switzerland. But I have not resolved upon it, and I believe I shall not. I am balancing upon a wish of visiting at least, if not returning for good and all (as the phrase is) to America. If I do not do that, I shall spend the summer with some or other of those friends, who have invited me to their country-houses."

I was charged with abundance of love to you, and Sally, and Ben, from our sister Bache and her amiable daughters. I spent some days at Preston, visited several friends in Cumberland, Westmoreland, Yorkshire, and Staffordshire. Rachel Wilson sent her love to you and our children, as did our remaining relations at Birmingham, where I likewise stayed several days. In Cumberland I ascended a very high mountain, where I had a prospect of a most beautiful country, of hills, fields, lakes, villas, &c., and at Whitehaven went down the coal mines, till they told me I was eighty fathoms under the surface of the sea, which rolled over our heads; so that I have been nearer both the upper and lower regions, than ever in my life before. My love to our children, and all inquiring friends. I am ever, my dear Debby, your affectionate husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Removal of Lord Hillsborough. — Lord Dartmouth.

London, 17 August, 1772.

DEAR SON,

At length we have got rid of Lord Hillsborough, and Lord Dartmouth takes his place, to the great satisfaction of all the friends of America. You will hear it said among you, I suppose, that the interest of the Ohio planters has ousted him; but the truth is, what I wrote you long since, that all his brother ministers disliked him extremely, and wished for a fair occasion of tripping up his heels; so, seeing that he made a point of defeating our scheme, they made another of supporting it, on purpose to mortify him, which they knew his pride could not bear. I do not mean

they would have done this, if they had thought our proposal bad in itself, or his opposition well founded; but I believe, if he had been on good terms with them, they would not have differed with him for so small a matter. The King, too, was tired of him and of his administration, which had weakened the affection and respect of the colonies for a royal government, of which (I may say it to you) I used proper means from time to time that his Majesty should have due information and convincing proofs. More of this when I see you.

The King's dislike made the others more firmly united in the resolution of disgracing Hillsborough, by setting at nought his famous report.* But, now that business is done, perhaps our affair may be less regarded in the cabinet and suffered to linger, and possibly may yet miscarry. Therefore let us beware of every word and action, that may betray a confidence in its success, lest we render ourselves ridiculous in case of disappointment. We are now pushing for a completion of the business; but the time is unfavorable, everybody gone or going into the country, which gives room for accidents.

I am writing by Falconer, and therefore in this only add, that I am ever your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The regard Lord Dartmouth has always done me the honor to express for me, gives me room to hope being able to obtain more in favor of our colonies upon occasion, than I could for some time past.

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* See this *Report*, Vol. IV. p. 303.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Use of bodily Exercise.

London, 19 August, 1772

Dear Son,

In yours of May 14th, you acquaint me with your indisposition, which gave me great concern. The resolution you have taken to use more exercise is extremely proper; and I hope you will steadily perform it. It is of the greatest importance to prevent diseases, since the cure of them by physic is so very precarious.

In considering the different kinds of exercise, I have thought, that the *quantum* of each is to be judged of, not by time or by distance, but by the degree of warmth it produces in the body. Thus, when I observe, if I am cold when I get into a carriage in a morning, I may ride all day without being warmed by it; that, if on horseback my feet are cold, I may ride some hours before they become warm; but, if I am ever so cold on foot, I cannot walk an hour briskly, without glowing from head to foot by the quickened circulation; I have been ready to say, (using round numbers without regard to exactness, but merely to make a great difference,) that there is more exercise in *one* mile's riding on horseback, than *five* in a coach; and more in *one* mile's walking on foot, than in *five* on horseback; to which I may add, that there is more in walking *one* mile up and down stairs, than in *five* on a level floor. The two latter exercises may be had within doors, when the weather discourages going abroad; and the last may be had when one is pinched for time, as containing a great quantity of exercise in a handful of minutes. The dumb bell is another exercise of the latter compendious kind. By the use of

it I have in forty swings quickened my pulse from sixty to one hundred beats in a minute, counted by a second watch; and I suppose the warmth generally increases with quickness of pulse.

B. Franklin.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Lord Hillsborough refuses Admittance to him. — His agreeable Situation in London. — Desires to return Home. — Chosen into the Royal Academy at Paris.

London, 19 August, 1772.

Dear Son,

I received yours of June 30th. I am vexed that my letter to you, written at Glasgow, miscarried; not so much that you did not receive it, as that it is probably in other hands. It contained some accounts of what passed in Ireland, which were for you only.

As Lord Hillsborough in fact got nothing out of me, I should rather suppose he threw me away as an orange that would yield no juice, and therefore not worth more squeezing. When I had been a little while returned to London, I waited on him to thank him for his civilities in Ireland, and to discourse with him on a Georgia affair. The porter told me he was not at home. I left my card, went another time, and received the same answer, though I knew he was at home, a friend of mine being with him. After intermissions of a week each, I made two more visits, and received the same answer. The last time was on a levee day, when a number of carriages were at his door. My coachman driving up, alighted, and was opening the coach door, when the porter, seeing me, came out, and surlily chid the coachman for opening

the door before he had inquired whether my Lord was at home; and then turning to me, said, "My Lord is not at home." I have never since been nigh him, and we have only abused one another at a distance.

The contrast, as you observe, is very striking between his conversation with the chief justice, and his letter to you concerning your province. I know him to be as double and deceitful as any man I ever met with. But we have done with him, I hope, for ever. His removal has, I believe, been meditated ever since the death of the Princess Dowager. For I recollect, that on my complaining of him about that time to a friend at court, whom you may guess, he told me, we Americans were represented by Hillsborough as an unquiet people, not easily satisfied with any ministry; that, however, it was thought too much occasion had been given us to dislike the present; and asked me, whether, if he should be removed, I could name another likely to be more acceptable to us. I said, "Yes, there is Lord Dartmouth; we liked him very well when he was at the head of the Board formerly, and probably should like him again." This I heard no more of, but I am pretty sure it was reported where I could wish it, though I know not that it had any effect.

As to my situation here, nothing can be more agreeable, especially as I hope for less embarrassment from the new minister; a general respect paid me by the learned, a number of friends and acquaintance among them, with whom I have a pleasing intercourse; a character of so much weight, that it has protected me when some in power would have done me injury, and continued me in an office they would have deprived me of; my company so much desired, that I seldom dine at home in winter, and could spend the whole

summer in the country-houses of inviting friends, if I chose it. Learned and ingenious foreigners, that come to England, almost all make a point of visiting me; for my reputation is still higher abroad than here. Several of the foreign ambassadors have assiduously cultivated my acquaintance, treating me as one of their *corps*, partly I believe from the desire they have, from time to time, of hearing something of American affairs, an object become of importance in foreign courts, who begin to hope Britain's alarming power will be diminished by the defection of her colonies; and partly that they may have an opportunity of introducing me to the gentlemen of their country who desire it. The King, too, has lately been heard to speak of me with great regard.

These are flattering circumstances; but a violent longing for home sometimes seizes me, which I can no otherwise subdue but by promising myself a return next spring or next fall, and so forth. As to returning hither, if I once go back, I have no thoughts of it. I am too far advanced in life to propose three voyages more. I have some important affairs to settle at home, and, considering my double expenses here and there, I hardly think my salaries fully compensate the disadvantages. The late change, however, being thrown into the balance, determines me to stay another winter.

August 22*d.* — I find I omitted congratulating you on the honor of your election into the Society for propagating the Gospel. There you match indeed my Dutch honor. But you are again behind, for last night I received a letter from Paris, of which the enclosed is an extract, acquainting me that I am chosen *Associé Etranger* (foreign member) of the Royal Academy there. There are but eight of these *Associés Etrangers* in all Europe, and those of the most distinguished

names for science. The vacancy I have the honor of filling was made by the death of the late celebrated Van Swieten of Vienna. This mark of respect from the first academy in the world, which Abbé Nollet, one of its members, took so much pains to prejudice against my doctrines, I consider as a kind of victory without ink-shed, since I never answered him. I am told he has but one of his sect now remaining in the Academy. All the rest, who have in any degree acquainted themselves with electricity, are as he calls them *Franklinists.** Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ANTHONY BENEZET.†

On the Slave Trade.

London, 22 August, 1772.

DEAR FRIEND,

I made a little extract from yours of April 27th, of the number of slaves imported and perishing, with

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* The following is the reply, which Dr. Franklin wrote to the Duke de Vrillière, who had informed him of his having been chosen a member of the Royal Academy at Paris.

"Dear Sir; It was with the greatest pleasure I received the information your Grace has condescended to give me, of my nomination by the King to fill a vacancy in the Academy of Sciences, as *Associé Etranger*. I have a high sense of the great honor thereby conferred on me, and beg that my grateful acknowledgments may be presented to his Majesty With the greatest respect, &c." — *London, September 4th*, 1772.

† A distinguished philanthropist, who was born in France, but passed the larger part of his life in Philadelphia. He belonged to the Society of Friends. He was remarkable for his disinterestedness and benevolence in all the affairs of life; but the objects, to which his thoughts and his time were the most earnestly devoted, were the amelioration of the condition of the negroes and the abolition of the slave trade. His writings are supposed to have had considerable influence in preparing the public mind for this latter event in the United States, which was finally consummated in the year 1808. He died at Philadelphia, May 3d, 1784, at the age of seventy-one.

some close remarks on the hypocrisy of this country, which encourages such a detestable commerce by laws for promoting the Guinea trade; while it piqued itself on its virtue, love of liberty, and the equity of its courts, in setting free a single negro. This was inserted in the *London Chronicle*, of the 20th of June last.

I thank you for the Virginia address, which I shall also publish with some remarks. I am glad to hear that the disposition against keeping negroes grows more general in North America. Several pieces have been lately printed here against the practice, and I hope in time it will be taken into consideration and suppressed by the legislature. Your labors have already been attended with great effects. I hope, therefore, you and your friends will be encouraged to proceed. My hearty wishes of success attend you, being ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY.

Lord Hillsborough's Resignation. — Lord Dartmouth succeeds him. — Lord Rochford.

London, 22 August, 1772.

Dear Friend,

I acknowledged before the receipt of your favor of May 14th, since which I have no line from you. It will be a pleasure to render any service to Mr. Tilghman, whom you recommended.

The acts passed in your winter and spring sessions I have not yet received; nor have I heard from Mr. Wilmot, that they have been presented.

Lord Hillsborough, mortified by the Committee of Council's approbation of our grant, in opposition to his

report, has resigned. I believe, when he offered to do so, he had such an opinion of his importance, that he did not think it would be accepted; and that it would be thought prudent rather to set our grant aside than part with him. His colleagues in the ministry were all glad to get rid of him, and perhaps for this reason joined more readily in giving him that mortification. Lord Dartmouth succeeds him, who has much more favorable dispositions towards the colonies. He has heretofore expressed some personal regard for me, and I hope now to find our business with the Board more easy to transact.

Your observations on the state of the Islands did not come to hand, till after Lord Rochford had withdrawn his petition.* His Lordship and the promoters of it were so roasted on the occasion, that I believe another of the kind will not very soon be thought of. The Proprietor was at the expense of the opposition; and, as I knew it would not be necessary, and thought it might be inconvenient to our affairs, I did not openly engage in it; but I gave some private assistance, that I believe was not without effect. I think too that Mr. Jackson's opinion was of great service. I would lodge a copy of your paper in the Plantation Office against any similar future applications, if you approve of it. I only think the Island holders make too great a concession to the crown, when they suppose it may have a right to quitrent. It can have none, in my opinion, on the old grants from Indians, Swedes, and Dutch, where none was reserved. And I think those grants so clearly good, as to need no confirmation; to obtain which I suppose is the only motive for offering such quitrent. I imagine, too, that it may not be amiss to

* Islands in the Delaware River, to which Lord Rochford had made a claim.

affix a *caveat* in the Plantation Office, in the behalf of holders of property in those islands, against any grant of them that may be applied for, till they have had timely notice, and an opportunity of being fully heard. Mr. Jackson is out of town, but I shall confer with him on the subject as soon as he returns. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Petition to the King. — Lord Dartmouth appointed Minister of American Affairs.

London, 3 September, 1772.

Sir,

I write this line, just to acknowledge the receipt of your several favors of July 15th and 16th, containing the resolves of the House relating to the governor's salary, and the petition to the King.

Lord Dartmouth, now our American minister, is at present in the country, and will probably not be in town till the season of business comes on. I shall then immediately put the petition into his hands, to be presented to his Majesty. I may be mistaken, but I imagine we shall not meet the same difficulty in transacting business with him, as with his predecessor, on whose removal I congratulate you and the Assembly most heartily. I shall write fully by some of the next Boston ships; at present can only add, that, with the sincerest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

Moral Algebra, or Method of deciding doubtful Matters with One's Self.

London, 19 September, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

In the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice, I cannot, for want of sufficient premises, counsel you *what* to determine; but, if you please, I will tell you *how*. When those difficult cases occur, they are difficult, chiefly because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons *pro* and *con* are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves, and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us.

To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns; writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con;* then during three or four days' consideration, I put down under the different heads short hints of the different motives, that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in one view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights; and, where I find two (one on each side) that seem equal, I strike them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some *two* reasons *con*, I strike out the *three*. If I judge some *two* reasons *con*, equal to some *three* reasons *pro*, I strike out the *five;* and thus proceeding I find at length where the *balance* lies; and if, after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of mportance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And, though the weight

of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities, yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge better, and am less liable to make a rash step; and in fact I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral* or *prudential algebra.*

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. Franklin.

TO JOHN BARTRAM.

Rhubarb. — Upland Rice. — Chinese Tallow Tree.

London, 17 October, 1772.

My dear old Friend,

I received some time since the enclosed letter from Dr. Hope; and lately the gold medal it mentions was delivered to me for you. By the first ship directly to Philadelphia, I shall send it, in the care of some safe hand, thinking it not so well to hazard it with this letter round through New York.

I hope the rhubarb you have sown and distributed will be taken care of. There seems to me no doubt of its doing as well with us as in Scotland. Remember, that for use the root does not come to its perfection of power and virtue in less than seven years. The physicians here, who have tried the Scotch, approve it much, and say it is fully equal to the best imported. I send you enclosed a small box of Upland rice, brought from Cochin China. It grows there on dry grounds, and not in water like the common sort. Also a few seeds of the Chinese tallow tree. They have been carefully preserved in bringing hither by

Mr. Ellis's method. I had them from him, and he tells me they may grow under your skilful care. My love to Mrs. Bartram, and all yours, from your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Petition to the King put into the Hands of Lord Dartmouth.

London, 4 November, 1772.

SIR,

Lord Dartmouth, our American minister, came to town last week, and held his first levee on Wednesday, when I paid my respects to him, acquainting him at the same time, that I should in a few days wait upon him, on business from Boston; which I have accordingly since done, and have put your petition to the King into his Lordship's hands, that being the regular course.

He received me very obligingly, made no objection to my acting as agent without an appointment assented to by the governor, as his predecessor had done, so that I hope business is getting into a better train. I shall use my best endeavours in supporting the petition, and write you more fully by the next ship to Boston. In the mean time I remain with great respect, your most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY.

Court of Exchequer. — The India Company. — Duty on Tea.

London, 2 December, 1772.

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you are returned again to a seat in the Assembly, where your abilities are so useful and necessary in the service of your country. We must not in the course of public life expect immediate approbation and immediate grateful acknowledgment of our services. But let us persevere through abuse and even injury. The internal satisfaction of a good conscience is always present, and time will do us justice in the minds of the people, even those at present the most prejudiced against us.

I have given Dr. Denormandie a recommendation to a friend in Geneva, for which place he set out this morning; and I shall be glad of any opportunity of serving him when he returns to London. I see by the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, of October 21st, that you are continued Speaker, and myself agent; but I have no line from you or the Committee relative to instructions. Perhaps I shall hear from you by Falconer. I find myself upon very good terms with our new minister, Lord Dartmouth, who we have reason to think means well to the colonies. I believe all are now sensible, that nothing is to be got by contesting with or oppressing us.

Two circumstances have diverted me lately. One was, that, being at the court of exchequer on some business of my own, I there met with one of the commissioners of the stamp office, who told me he attended with a memorial from that board, to be allowed in their accounts the difference between their

expense in endeavouring to establish those offices in America, and the amount of what they received, which from Canada and the West India Islands was but about *fifteen hundred pounds*, while the expense, if I remember right, was above *twelve thousand pounds*, being for stamps and stamping, with paper and parchment returned upon their hands, freight, &c. The other is the present difficulties of the India Company, and of government on their account. The Company have accepted bills, which they find themselves unable to pay, though they have the value of two millions in tea and other India goods in their stores, perishing under a want of demand; their credit thus suffering, and their stock falling one hundred and twenty per cent, whereby the government will lose the *four hundred thousand pounds* per annum, it having been stipulated that it should no longer be paid, if the dividend fell to that mark. And, although it is known, that the American market is lost by continuing the duty on tea, and that we are supplied by the Dutch, who doubtless take the opportunity of smuggling other India goods among us with the tea, so that for the five years past we might probably have otherwise taken off the greatest part of what the Company have on hand, and so have prevented their present embarrassment, yet the honor of government is supposed to forbid the repeal of the American tea duty; while the amount of all the duties goes on decreasing, so that the balance of this year does not (as I have it from good authority) exceed eighty pounds, after paying the collection; not reckoning the immense expense of *guarda-costas*, &c. Can an American help smiling at these blunders? Though, in a national light, they are truly deplorable.

With the sincerest esteem and inviolable attachment, I am, my dear friend, ever most affectionately yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Petition from Massachusetts Bay.— Conversation with Lord Dartmouth respecting it.

London, 2 December, 1772.

Sir,

The above is a copy of my last. A few days after my leaving your petition with Lord Dartmouth, his Lordship sent for me to discourse with me upon it. After a long audience, he was pleased to say, that, notwithstanding all I had said or could say, in support and justification of the petition, he was sure the presenting it at this time could not possibly produce any good; that the King would be exceedingly offended, but what steps his Majesty would take upon it was uncertain; perhaps he would require the opinion of the judges or government lawyers, which would surely be against us; perhaps he might lay it before Parliament, and so the censure of both Houses would be drawn down upon us. The most favorable thing to be expected was, a severe reprimand to the Assembly, by order of his Majesty, the natural consequence of which must be more discontent and uneasiness in the province. That, possessed as he was with great good will for New England, he was extremely unwilling, that one of the first acts of his administration, with regard to the Massachusetts, should be of so unpleasant a nature. That minds had been heated and irritated on both sides of the water, but he hoped those heats were now cooling, and he was averse to the addition of fresh fuel. That, as I had delivered the petition to him officially, he must present it, if I insisted upon it; but he wished I would

first consult my constituents, who might possibly, on reconsideration, think fit to order its being deferred.

I answered, that the great majority, with which the petition and the resolves on which it was founded were carried through the House, made it scarce expectable, that their order would be countermanded; that the slighting, evading, or refusing to receive petitions from the colonies, on some late occasions by the Parliament, had occasioned a total loss of the respect for and confidence in that body, formerly subsisting so strongly in America, and brought on a questioning of their authority; that his Lordship might observe that petitions came no more from thence to Parliament, but to the King only; that the King appeared now to be the only connexion between the two countries; and that, as a continued union was essentially necessary to the wellbeing of the whole empire, I should be sorry to see that link weakened, as the other had been; that I thought it a dangerous thing for any government to refuse receiving petitions, and thereby prevent the subjects from giving vent to their griefs.

His Lordship interrupted me by replying, that he did not refuse to deliver the petition; that it should never justly be said of him, that he interrupted the complaints of his Majesty's subjects; and that he must and would present it, as he had said before, whenever I should absolutely require it; but, for motives of pure good will to the province, he wished me not to insist on it, till I should receive fresh orders.

Finally, considering that, since the petition was ordered, there had been a change in the American administration; that the present minister was our friend in the repeal of the Stamp Act, and seems still to have good dispositions towards us; that you had mentioned

to me the probability, that the House would have remonstrated on all their other grievances, had not their time been taken up with the difficult business of a general valuation; and, since the complaint of this petition was likely alone to give offence, it might perhaps be judged advisable to give the substance of all our complaints at once, rather than in parts and after a reprimand received; I say, upon the whole, I thought it best not to disoblige him in the beginning of his administration, by refusing him what he seemed so desirous of, a delay at least in presenting the petition, till farther directions should be received from my constituents. If, after deliberation, they should send me fresh orders, I shall immediately obey them, and the application to the crown itself may possibly derive greater weight from the reconsideration given it, while the temper of the House may be somewhat calmed by the removal of a minister, who had rendered himself so obnoxious to them. Accordingly, I consented to the delay desired, wherein I hope my conduct will not be disapproved.*

With the greatest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your and the committee's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

* With this letter were communicated *Hutchinson's Letters*, which produced so much excitement at the time in Massachusetts. For an extract relating to that subject, which is here omitted, see Vol. IV p. 414.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Conversation with Lord Dartmouth on American Affairs. — Condition of the India Company. — Security of the Colonies lies in their growing Strength.

London, 5 January, 1773.

SIR,

I did myself the honor of writing to you on the 2d of December past, enclosing some original letters from persons in Boston, which I hope got safe to hand. I have since received your favor of October 27th, which containing in a small compass so full an enumeration of our grievances, the steps necessary to remove them, and the happy effects that must follow, I thought that though marked *private*, it might be of use to communicate it to Lord Dartmouth; the rather too, as he would there find himself occasionally mentioned with proper respect, and learn that his character was esteemed in the colonies. Accordingly I wrote him a few lines, and enclosed it a day or two before I was to wait on his Lordship, that he might have a little time to consider the contents.*

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* The following note accompanied the letter, when it was communicated to Lord Dartmouth.

"*Craven Street*, 8 *December*, 1772. — Dr. Franklin presents his best respects to Lord Dartmouth, and, believing it may be agreeable as well as useful to him to receive other information of the sentiments and dispositions of the leading people in America, besides what ministers are usually furnished with from the officers of the crown residing there takes the liberty of communicating to his Lordship a letter just received from the Speaker of the Assembly of the Massachusetts Bay, written not as Speaker but in his private capacity.

"Dr. Franklin purposes to wait on Lord Dartmouth at his levee tomorrow, and shall be happy if he may bring from thence any thing proper to write in answer, that should tend to compose the minds of people in that province, at present greatly disquieted and alarmed by some late measures of government."

When I next attended him, he returned me the letter with great complaisance in his countenance; said he was glad to find that people in America were disposed to think so favorably of him; that they did him but justice in believing he had the best disposition towards them, for he wished sincerely their welfare, though possibly he might not always think with them, as to the means of obtaining that end; that the heads of complaint in your letter were many, some of them requiring much consideration, and therefore it could scarce be expected that a sudden change should be made in so many measures, supposing them all improper to be continued, which perhaps might not be the case. It was however his opinion, that, if the Americans continued quiet, and gave no fresh offence to government, those measures would be reconsidered, and such relief given as upon consideration should be thought reasonable.

I need not remark, that there is not much in such general discourse; but I could then obtain nothing more particular, except that his Lordship expressed in direct terms his disapprobation of the instruction for exempting the colonies from taxation; which, however, was, as he said, in confidence to me, relying that no public mention should be made of his opinion on that head.

In the mean time, some circumstances are working in our favor with regard to the duties. It is found by the last year's accounts transmitted by the commissioners, that the balance in favor of Britain is but about eighty-five pounds, after payment of salaries, &c., exclusive of the charge of a fleet to enforce the collection. Then it is observed, that the India Company is so out of cash, that it cannot pay the bills drawn upon it, and its other debts; and at the same time so out of credit, that the Bank does not care to assist them,

whence they find themselves obliged to lower their dividend; the apprehension of which has sunk their stock from two hundred and eighty to one hundred and sixty, whereby several millions of property are annihilated, occasioning private bankruptcies and other distress, besides a loss to the public treasury of four hundred thousand pounds per annum, which the Company are not to pay into it as heretofore, if they are not able to keep up their dividend at twelve and a half. And, as they have at the same time tea and other India goods in their warehouses, to the amount of four millions, as some say, for which they want a market, and which, if it had been sold, would have kept up their credit, I take the opportunity of remarking in all companies the great imprudence of losing the American market, by keeping up the duty on tea, which has thrown that trade into the hands of the Dutch, Danes, Swedes, and French, who, according to the reports and letters of some custom-house officers in America, now supply by smuggling the whole continent, not with tea only, but accompany that article with other India goods, amounting, as supposed, in the whole to five hundred thousand pounds sterling per annum. This gives some alarm, and begins to convince people more and more of the impropriety of quarrelling with America, who at that rate might have taken off two millions and a half of those goods within these five years that the combination has subsisted, if the duty had not been laid, or had been speedily repealed.

But our great security lies, I think, in our growing strength, both in numbers and wealth; that creates an increasing ability of assisting this nation in its wars, which will make us more respectable, our friendship more valued, and our enmity feared; thence it will

soon be thought proper to treat us not with justice only, but with kindness, and thence we may expect in a few years a total change of measures with regard to us; unless, by a neglect of military discipline, we should lose all martial spirit, and our western people become as tame as those in the eastern dominions of Britain, when we may expect the same oppressions; for there is much truth in the Italian saying, *Make yourselves sheep, and the wolves will eat you.* In confidence of this coming change in our favor, I think our prudence is meanwhile to be quiet, only holding up our rights and claims on all occasions in resolutions, memorials, and remonstrances; but bearing patiently the little present notice that is taken of them. They will all have their weight in time, and that time is at no great distance. With the greatest esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN.

His Birthday.

London, 6 January, 1773.

My dear Child,

I feel some regard for this sixth of January, as my old nominal birthday, though the change of style has carried the real day forward to the 17th, when I shall be, if I live till then, sixty-seven years of age. It seems but the other day since you and I were ranked among the boys and girls, so swiftly does time fly! We have, however, great reason to be thankful, that so much of our lives has passed so happily; and that so great a share of health and strength remains, as to render life yet comfortable.

I received your kind letter of November 16th by Sutton. The apples are not yet come on shore, but I thank you for them. Captain All was so good as to send me a barrel of excellent ones, which serve me in the mean time. I rejoice to hear that you all continue well. But you have so used me to have something pretty about the boy, that I am a little disappointed in finding nothing more of him, than that he is gone up to Burlington. Pray give in your next, as usual, a little of his history.

All our friends here are pleased with your remembering them, and send their love to you. Give mine to all that inquire concerning me, and a good deal to our children. I am ever, my dear Debby, your affectionate husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN BARTRAM.

London, 10 February, 1773.

MY DEAR GOOD OLD FRIEND,

I am glad to learn that the turnip seed and the rhubarb grow with you, and that the turnip is approved. It may be depended on, that the rhubarb is the genuine sort. But, to have the root in perfection, it ought not to be taken out of the ground in less than seven years. Herewith I send you a few seeds of what is called the cabbage turnip. They say that it will stand the frost of the severest winter, and so make a fine early feed for cattle in the spring, when their other fodder may be scarce. I send also some seed of the Scotch cabbage; and some peas that are much applauded here, but I forget for what purpose, and shall inquire and let you know in my next.

I think there has been no good opportunity of sending your medal since I received it, till now. It goes in a box to my son Bache, with the seeds. I wish you joy of it. Notwithstanding the failure of your eyes, you write as distinctly as ever. With great esteem and respect, I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. Franklin.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Ministry embarrassed with the Affairs of the India Company. — Distress among the Manufacturers.

London, 14 February, 1773.

Dear Son,

The opposition are now attacking the ministry on the St. Vincent's affair, which is generally condemned here, and some think Lord Hillsborough will be given up, as the adviser of that expedition. But, if it succeeds, perhaps all will blow over. The ministry are more embarrassed with the India affairs. The continued refusal of North America to take tea from hence, has brought infinite distress on the Company. They imported great quantities in faith that that agreement could not hold; and now they can neither pay their debts nor dividends; their stock has sunk to the annihilating near three millions of their property, and government will lose its four hundred thousand pounds a year; while their teas lie on hand. The bankruptcies, brought on partly by this means, have given such a shock to credit, as has not been experienced here since the South Sea year. And this has affected the great manufacturers so much, as to oblige them to discharge their hands, and thousands of Spitalfields and Manchester weavers are now starv-

ing, or subsisting on charity. Blessed effects of pride, pique, and passion in government, which should have no passions. Yours, &c.*

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Proceedings of the Town of Boston. — Governor Hutchinson's Speech. — Duty on Tea.

London, 9 March, 1773.

SIR,

I did myself the honor of writing to you on the 2d of December and the 5th of January past. Since which I have received your favor of November 28th, enclosing the Votes and Proceedings of the Town of

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* When the bill imposing a tax on glass, paper, and painters' colors was repealed, the ministry proposed a reduction of the duty on tea from one shilling to three pence a pound, thus easing the colonies, as they said, of ninepence on a pound. But, at the same time, Lord North avowed the object of retaining this threepenny tax to be for the purpose of asserting and maintaining the right of Parliament to tax the colonies. He said, that "he even wished to have repealed the whole, if it could have been done without giving up that absolute right; that he should, to the last hour of his life, contend for taxing America; but, he was sorry to say, the behaviour of the Americans had by no means been such as to merit such favor; neither did he think a total repeal would quell the troubles there, as experience had shown, that, to lay taxes when America was quiet, and repeal them when America was in flames, only added fresh claims to those people on every occasion." And he added, in speaking of the non-importation agreements in the colonies, "North America, from its natural situation, and the dearness of labor, would be many years before it could supply itself with manufactures; therefore there was not so much to fear from their resolutions as the nation imagined." DEBRETT'S *Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. V. p. 254. With these views he retained the three pence a pound on tea, and the East India Company was induced to make large importations for the American market; but the people held to their resolutions, resisted the tax, and defeated the sales, thus bringing heavy losses upon the Company.

Boston, which I have reprinted here, with a Preface. Herewith I send you a few copies.*

Governor Hutchinson's speech, at the opening of your January session, has been printed and industriously circulated here by (as I think) the ministerial people, which I take to be no good sign. The Assembly's answer to it is not yet arrived, and, in the mean while, it seems to make impression on the minds of many not well acquainted with the dispute. The tea duty, however, is under the consideration of Parliament, for a repeal, on a petition from the East India Company, and no new measures have been talked of against America, or are likely to be taken during the present session. I was therefore preparing to return home by the spring ships, but have been advised by our friends to stay till the session is over; as the commission sent to Rhode Island, and discontents in your province, with the correspondence of the towns, may possibly give rise to something here, when my being on the spot may be of use to our country. I conclude to stay a little longer. In the mean time I must hope, that great care will be taken to keep our people quiet; since nothing is more wished for by our enemies, than, by insurrections, we should give a good pretence for increasing the military among us, and putting us under more severe restraints. And it must be evident, that, by our rapidly increasing strength, we shall soon become of so much importance, that none of our just claims of privilege will be, as heretofore, unattended to, nor any security we can wish for our rights be denied us. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

* See the *Preface* here mentioned, Vol. IV. p. 381.

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Lord Dartmouth. — Measures adopted by the Towns in Massachusetts. — Conduct of the Governor. — Administration in England universally disapproved.

Boston, 15 March, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

I have been confined to my house great part of this winter by my valetudinary state, and been little able to see and converse with my friends, and less to write to them. A line from you would have greatly refreshed me in this confinement, as your letters have ever been one of the greatest entertainments in my life; but I do not mean to complain, having been so greatly indebted to you.

Till of late, there has been little remarkable in our public affairs for more than a year. The appointment of Lord Dartmouth to the American Department was received here with a general joy, which was soon checked by his official letter to the governor of Rhode Island, respecting the Court of Inquiry into the burning of the Gaspee, and the directions therein given to send the accused, with the witnesses, to Great Britain for trial; as also by the account of the provision made by the King for the support of the justices of our Superior Court. These events made a deep impression on the minds of people through the province. The latter, it is known, took place before Lord Hillsborough's removal, but the former was more unexpected, as the disposition of Lord Dartmouth to serve the colonies, and to promote mild measures, was not doubted.

Soon after the appointment for the Superior Justices was known, the town of Boston had a meeting. Their

Committee drew up a state of the public grievances, which was accompanied with a letter to every town in the province, desiring their brethren to express their own sense of these important matters. Though this measure was opposed by a number of the most respectable friends to liberty in the town, among whom were three out of four of the representatives of Boston, from an apprehension that many towns for various reasons might not choose to adopt it, and in that case the attempt might greatly prejudice the interest it was designed to promote; and though the governor and his friends in every place did not fail to avail themselves of this, and every other circumstance to frustrate it; yet it had an effect through the whole province beyond the most sanguine expectations of its friends; and the public acts of a great majority of the towns, whatever may be thought of the manner of expression in some of them, clearly demonstrate, that it is not a small faction, but the body of the people, who deem themselves in a state of oppression, and that their most essential rights are violated. The pamphlet containing the proceedings of Boston has already been sent to you, and I should enclose those of some other towns, had I a sure and easy way of conveying such large papers without fear of burdening, when I meant to entertain you.

Upon the convening of the General Assembly, the governor opened it with a long speech in defence of the absolute supremacy of Parliament over the colonies, inviting both Houses to offer what they had to object against this principle. His prudence, however, in this step, and whether he will be thanked for it by administration, is doubted. By the replies of the two Houses, perfectly united in the main principles, the governor and his friends received a shock, which they

could not conceal, while the people are greatly confirmed in their sentiments, and encouraged to support them.

I will venture to mention, in confidence to you, that the governor, appearing uneasy after he had received the second reply of the Council, employed his utmost influence to have it reconsidered and altered. Having endeavoured privately to prepare the minds of some influential members for this, he enclosed it in a letter to one of the Board, requesting him to introduce the reconsideration in Council. Presently he appears there himself, and argues strenuously in favor of this. The vote for the reply, as it had been delivered, was, however, unanimous, except two, who desired to be excused from voting either way. Opposed, as he now stands, to both Houses and the body of the people, an undisguised and zealous advocate for every thing we account a grievance, how far his situation resembles that of his predecessor I leave you to judge.

The opposition here to the hard and oppressive measures of the British administration never appeared to me founded so much in knowledge and principle; never so systematical, deliberate, and firm, as it is at present. I may be mistaken in this opinion, but it leads me most earnestly to wish, for the sake of both countries, for some pacification, some line to be drawn, some bill of rights for America, some security against the unlimited supremacy and unbounded power over us, not only of our sovereign, but also of our fellow subjects in Britain; and, unless something of this sort soon takes place, there is danger that things will run into confusion. Knowing your past services to the province, and being persuaded both of your ability and inclination still to serve it, in the best manner that the state of things will allow, I hope all obstruc-

tion to your receiving the grants made for you by the House will soon be removed.

I have been told that you and some others have lately obtained, through much opposition, a grant of land for a new province. If this be true, and your prospect agreeable, you have no friend that takes a warmer part in it, through your large circle, than your obedient humble servant,

SAMUEL COOPER.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Lord Dartmouth's Wish to heal the Breach between Great Britain and America.

London, 3 April, 1773

SIR,

My last was of the 9th past, since which nothing material has occurred relating to the colonies. The Assembly's answer to Governor Hutchinson's speech is not yet come over, but I find that even his friends here are apprehensive of some ill consequences from his forcing the Assembly into that dispute; and begin to say it was not prudently done, though they believe it meant well. I enclose for you two newspapers, in which it is mentioned. Lord Dartmouth the other day expressed his wish to me, that some means could be fallen upon to heal the breach. I took the freedom to tell him, that he could do much in it, if he would exert himself. I think I see signs of relenting in some others. The Bishop of St. Asaph's Sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel is much talked of, for its catholic spirit and favorable sentiments relating to the colonies. I will endeavour

to get a copy to send you.* With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Bishop of St. Asaph's Sermon. — Its liberal Sentiments in Regard to America.

London, 6 April, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I received yours of February 2d, with the papers of information that accompany it.

I have sent to Mr. Galloway one of the Bishop of St. Asaph's Sermons, before your Society for propagating the Gospel. I would have sent you one, but you will receive it of course as a member. It contains such liberal and generous sentiments, relating to the conduct of government here towards America, that Sir John Pringle says it was written in compliment to me. But, from the intimacy of friendship in which I live with the author, I know he has expressed nothing but what he thinks and feels; and I honor him the more,

* Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph's, was a very intimate friend of Dr. Franklin's, and decidedly opposed to the coercive measures adopted by the British government against America. Besides this Sermon on that subject, he published "A Speech intended to have been spoken on the Bill for altering the Charters of Massachusetts Bay," which was greatly admired for the vigor and beauty of its style, even by those who did not approve its sentiments. During the latter years of his residence in England, Dr. Franklin passed many days at different times in the family of the Bishop, and kept up a correspondence with some of them during his life. His humorous letter to Miss Georgiana Shipley, one of the Bishop's daughters, on the death of her squirrel, is well known. See Vol. II. p. 170. Her letters to Dr. Franklin prove her to have been a young lady of a highly endowed and cultivated mind, lively sensibility, and generous disposition.

that, through the mere hope of doing good, he has hazarded the displeasure of the court, and of course the prospect of further preferment. Possibly indeed the ideas of the court may change; for I think I see some alarms at the discontents in New England, and some appearance of softening in the disposition of government, on the idea that matters have been carried too far there. But all depends upon circumstances and events. We govern from hand to mouth. There seems to be no wise, regular plan.

I saw Lord Dartmouth about two weeks since. He mentioned nothing to me of your application for additional salary, nor did I to him, for I do not like it. I fear it will embroil you with your people.

While I am writing comes to hand yours of March 2d. My letter by the October packet must have been sent, as usual, to the office by the bellman. That being, as you inform me, rubbed open, as some of yours to me have been, gives an additional circumstance of probability to the conjecture made in mine of December 2d. For the future I shall send letters of consequence to the office, when I use the packet conveyance, by my clerk.

Your accounts of the numbers of people, births, burials, &c., in your province will be very agreeable to me, and particularly so to Dr. Price. Compared with former accounts, they will show the increase of your people, but not perfectly, as I think a great many have gone from New Jersey to the more southern colonies.

The Parliament is like to sit till the end of June, as Mr. Cooper tells me. I had thoughts of returning home about that time. The Boston Assembly's answer to the governor's speech, which I have just received, may possibly produce something here to occasion my longer stay. I am your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

TO DEAN WOODWARD.

Slavery in America. — Ships transporting Convicts to Virginia.

London, 10 April, 1773.

REVEREND SIR,

Desirous of being revived in your memory, I take this opportunity, by my good friend Mrs. Blacker, of sending you a printed piece, and a manuscript, both on a subject you and I frequently conversed upon with concurring sentiments, when I had the pleasure of seeing you in Dublin. I have since had the satisfaction to learn, that a disposition to abolish slavery prevails in North America, that many of the Pennsylvanians have set their slaves at liberty, and that even the Virginia Assembly have petitioned the King for permission to make a law for preventing the importation of more into that colony. This request, however, will probably not be granted, as their former laws of that kind have always been repealed, and as the interest of a few merchants here has more weight with government, than that of thousands at a distance.

Witness a late fact. The gaol distemper being frequently imported and spread in Virginia by the ships transporting convicts, occasioning the death of many honest, innocent people there, a law was made to oblige those ships arriving with that distemper to perform a quarantine. But the two merchants of London, contractors in that business, alleging that this might increase the expense of their voyages, the law was at their instance repealed here. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Governor Hutchinson's Speech to the Assembly of Massachusetts. — Conversation with Lord Dartmouth respecting it and the Assembly's Answer.

London, 6 May, 1773.

Sir,

I have received none of your favors since that of November 28th. I have since written to you of the following dates, December 2d, January 5th, March 9th, and April 3d, which I hope got safe to hand.

The Council and Assembly's answer to Governor Hutchinson's speech I caused to be printed here, as soon as I received them. His reply I see since printed also, but their rejoinder is not yet come. If he intended, by reviving that dispute, to recommend himself, he has greatly missed his aim; for the administration are chagrined with his officiousness, their intention having been to let all contention subside, and by degrees suffer matters to return to the old channel. They are now embarrassed by his proceedings; for, if they lay the governor's despatches, containing the declaration of the General Court, before Parliament, they apprehend measures may be taken, that will widen the breach; which would be more particularly inconvenient at this time, when the disturbed state of Europe gives some apprehensions of a general war. On the other hand, if they do not lay them before Parliament, they give advantage to opposition against themselves on some future occasion, in a charge of criminal neglect. Some say he must be a fool; others, that through some misinformation he really supposed Lord Hillsborough to be again in office.

Yesterday I had a conversation with Lord Dartmouth, of which I think it right to give you some

account. On my saying, that I had no late advices from Boston, and asking if his Lordship had any, he said, "None since the governor's second speech; but what difficulties that gentleman has brought us all into by his imprudence! Though I suppose he meant well; yet what can now be done? It is impossible, that Parliament can suffer such a declaration of the General Assembly, asserting its independency, to pass unnoticed." "In my opinion," said I, "it would be better and more prudent to take no notice of it. It is *words* only. Acts of Parliament are still submitted to there. No force is used to obstruct their execution. And, while that is the case, Parliament would do well to turn a deaf ear, and seem not to know that such declarations had ever been made. Violent measures against the province will not change the opinion of the people. Force could do no good." "I do not know," said he, "that force would be thought of; but perhaps an act may pass to lay them under some inconveniences, till they rescind that declaration. Can they not withdraw it? I wish they could be persuaded to reconsider the matter, and do it of themselves, voluntarily, and thus leave things between us on the old footing, the points undiscussed. Don't you think," continued his Lordship, "such a thing possible?" "No, my Lord," said I, "I think it is impossible. If they were even to wish matters back in the situation before the governor's speech, and the dispute obliterated, they cannot withdraw their answers till he first withdraws his speech, which methinks would be an awkward operation, that perhaps he will hardly be directed to perform. As to an act of Parliament, laying that country under inconveniences, it is likely that it will only put them as heretofore on some method of incommoding this country till the act is repealed;

and so we shall go on injuring and provoking each other, instead of cultivating that good will and harmony, so necessary to the general welfare."

He said, that might be, and he was sensible our divisions must weaken the whole; "for we are yet *one empire*," said he, "whatever may be the sentiments of the Massachusetts Assembly;" but he did not see how that could be avoided. He wondered, as the dispute was now of public notoriety, Parliament had not already called for the despatches; and he thought he could not omit much longer the communicating them, however unwilling he was to do it, from his apprehension of the consequences. "But what," his Lordship was pleased to say, "if you were in my place, would or could you do? Would you hazard the being called to account, in some future session of Parliament for keeping back the communication of despatches of such importance?" I said, "his Lordship could best judge what, in his situation, was fittest for him to do; I could only give my poor opinion with regard to Parliament, that, supposing the despatches laid before them, they would act most prudently in ordering them to lie on the table, and take no further notice of them. For, were I as much an Englishman as I am an American, and ever so desirous of establishing the authority of Parliament, I protest to your Lordship, I cannot conceive of a single step the Parliament can take to increase it, that will not tend to diminish it; and after abundance of mischief they must finally lose it. The loss in itself perhaps would not be of much consequence, because it is an authority they can never well exercise for want of due information and knowledge, and therefore it is not worth hazarding the mischief to preserve it."

Then adding my wishes that I could be of any

service in healing our differences, his Lordship said, "I do not see any thing of more service, than prevailing on the General Assembly, if you can do it, to withdraw their answers to the governor's speech." "There is not," says I, "the least probability they will ever do that; for the country is all of one mind upon the subject. Perhaps the governor may have represented to your Lordship, that these are the opinions of a party only, and that great numbers are of different sentiments, which may in time prevail. But, if he does not deceive himself, he deceives your Lordship; for in both Houses, notwithstanding the influence appertaining to his office, there was not, in sending up those answers, a single dissenting voice." "I do not recollect," says his Lordship, "that the governor has written any thing of that kind. I am told, however, by gentlemen from that country, who pretend to know it, that there are many of the governor's opinion, but they dare not show their sentiments." "I never heard," said I, "that any one has suffered violence for siding with the governor." "Not violence, perhaps," said his Lordship, "but they are reviled and held in contempt, and people do not care to incur the disesteem and displeasure of their neighbours."

As I knew Governor Bernard had been in with his Lordship just before me, I thought he was probably one of these gentleman informants, and therefore said, "People, who are engaged in any party or have advised any measures, are apt to magnify the numbers of those they would have understood as approving their measures." His Lordship said, that was natural to suppose might be the present case; for whoever observed the conduct of parties here must have seen it a constant practice; and he agreed with me, that, though a *nemine contradicente* did not

prove the absolute agreement of every man in the opinion voted, it at least demonstrated the great prevalence of that opinion.

Thus ended our conference. I shall watch this business till the Parliament rises, and endeavour to make people in general as sensible of the inconveniences to this country, that may attend a continuance of the contest, as the Spitalfields weavers seem already to be in their petition to the King, which I herewith send you. I have already the pleasure to find, that my friend, the Bishop of St. Asaph's Sermon is universally approved and applauded, which I take to be no bad symptom. With sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Petition presented to the King, and the Answer.

London, 2 June, 1773.

Sir,

Since my last of the 6th past, I have been honored with yours of March 6th and 24th, enclosing a petition to the King, and a letter to Lord Dartmouth. On considering the whole, I concluded that a longer delay of presenting the first petition and remonstrance was not likely to answer any good purpose, and therefore immediately waited on Lord Dartmouth, and delivered to him the letter, and the second petition, at the same time re-delivering the first, and pressed his Lordship to present them to his Majesty, which he promised to do.

Enclosed I send you the answer I have just received from him, as this day's packet (the mail for which is

to be made up and despatched in a few hours) is the earliest opportunity, the ships for Boston not being to sail till the beginning of next week. By one of them I shall send a copy, with what observations occur to me on the occasion, which the time will not now permit me to write. In the mean while I would just beg leave to say, that I hope the House will come to no hasty resolves upon it. The longer they deliberate, the more maturely they consider, the greater weight will attend their resolutions. With sincere respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Duty on Tea.

London, 4 June, 1773.

Sir,

The above is a copy of mine per packet, which enclosed the original of his Majesty's answer to our petitions and remonstrance. I now send an exact copy of the same, which I did intend to accompany with some observations, and my sentiments on the general state of our affairs in this country, and the conduct proper for us to hold on this occasion. But, beginning to write, I find the matter too copious, and the subject, on reflection, too important, to be treated of in a hasty letter; and, being told the ships sail to-morrow, I must postpone it to another opportunity.

It was thought at the beginning of the session, that the American duty on tea would be taken off. But now the wise scheme is, to take off so much duty here, as will make tea cheaper in America than foreigners can supply us, and to confine the duty there,

to keep up the exercise of the right. They have no idea, that any people can act from any other principle but that of interest; and they believe, that three pence in a pound of tea, of which one does not perhaps drink ten pounds in a year, is sufficient to overcome all the patriotism of an American.

I purpose soon to write you very fully. As to the letters* I communicated to you, though I have not been able to obtain leave to take copies or publish them, I have permission to let the originals remain with you, as long as you may think it of any use to have them in possession. With great esteem, and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Committees of Correspondence.—Account of the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Assembly in Regard to Hutchinson's Letters.

Boston, 14 June, 1773.

Dear Sir,

We have received high eulogiums upon the replies of our Council and Commons from gentlemen of the most respectable characters in the other colonies, where there evidently appears an increasing regard for this province, and an inclination to unite for the common safety. Virginia has led the way, by proposing a communication and correspondence between all the Assemblies through the continent. The letter from their committee for this purpose was received here with no little joy, and the proposal agreed to in the most

* Letters from Governor Hutchinson and others. See above, p. 27

ready and respectful manner. Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire have already chosen committees, so that all New England is now united with Virginia in this salutary plan, and the accession of most, if not all, of the other colonies is not doubted. This opens a most agreeable prospect to the friends of our common rights.

In my last, I mentioned to you my having had a sight of some letters, that had been transmitted to the Speaker with leave to communicate them to me, and some others in confidence. I soon apprehended from the nature of the contents, and the number of persons to whom they were directed to be shown, that they could not long remain secret. However, I have preserved inviolable the trust reposed in me. Some, not named by you as confidants, had hints from London that such letters were come or coming, and began to suspect they were concealed in favor of the writers. The secret was kept till the meeting of the General Court, when so many members had obtained such general intimations of it, as to render them extremely inquisitive and solicitous. At last it was thought best to communicate them to the House, with the restrictions that accompanied them here. The House could not act upon them with those restrictions, but the substance of them was known everywhere, and the alarm given. Soon after, copies of them were brought into the House, said to have come from England by the last ships.

Many members scrupled to act upon these copies, while they were under such public engagements to the unknown proprietor of the originals. As the matter was now so public, and the restrictions could answer no good end, no view of the sender, but on the contrary might prevent in a great measure a proper

use of the letters for the public benefit, and for weakening the influence and power of the writers and their friends, and disarming their revenge, it was judged most expedient, by the gentlemen to whom they were first shown, to allow the House such a use of the originals, as they might think necessary to found their proceedings upon for the common safety. By whom and to whom they were sent is still a secret, known only to three persons here, and may still remain so, if you desire it.

I forgot to mention, that, upon the first appearance of the letters in the House, they voted, by a majority of one hundred and one to five, that the design and tendency of them were to subvert the constitution, and introduce arbitrary power. Their committee upon this matter reported this day a number of resolutions, which are to be printed by to-morrow morning, and every member furnished with a copy, that they may compare them with the letters; and to-morrow at three o'clock in the afternoon is the time appointed to decide upon the report. The acceptance of it by a great majority is not doubted.

Should the vessel that is to carry this letter remain long enough, I will send you a copy of the resolutions. Nothing could have been more seasonable, than the arrival of these letters. They have had great effect; they make deep impressions wherever they are known; they strip the mask from the writers, who, under the professions of friendship to their country, now plainly appear to have been endeavouring to build up themselves and their families upon its ruins. They and their adherents are shocked and dismayed; the confidence reposed in them by many is annihilated; and administration must soon see the necessity of putting the provincial power of the crown into other hands,

if they mean it should operate to any good effect. This, at present, is almost the universal sentiment.

The House have this day sent up the letters to the Board, which, I believe, will concur with them in the substance and spirit of their proceedings. We are highly indebted to our friends in London, and to you, Sir, in particular, for so important a communication, and hope, while it supports the cause of truth and justice, and promotes the deliverance of this abused and oppressed country, it will be attended with no disadvantage to them.

The inconveniences, that may accidentally arise from such generous interpositions, are abundantly compensated by the reflection, that they tend to the security and happiness of millions. I trust, however, that nothing of this kind will occur to disturb the agreeable feelings of those, who, in this instance, have done such extensive good. With great esteem, I am, &c.

SAMUEL COOPER.

FROM THOMAS CUSHING TO B. FRANKLIN.

Hutchinson's Letters. — Petition to the King for the Removal of Governor Hutchinson, and Lieutenant-Governor Oliver.

Province of Massachusetts Bay, 25 June, 1773.

SIR,

The House of Representatives have lately had divers letters, signed *Thomas Hutchinson*, *Andrew Oliver*, &c., laid before them, attested copies of which, you have enclosed; and, after maturely considering their contents, they have voted as their sense, that the tendency and design of said letters appear to have been to overthrow the constitution of this government, and

to introduce arbitrary power into this province; and have passed sundry resolves respecting these letters, which accompany this letter. They have also agreed upon and passed a petition to his Majesty, which you will receive with this enclosure, praying that his Ex cellency Thomas Hutchinson, governor, and Andrew Oliver, lieutenant-governor, of this province, be removed from the posts they hold within this government; which petition you are desired, as soon as possible, to present to his Majesty;* and, as the persons aforenamed have by this their conduct rendered themselves very obnoxious, and have entirely lost the confidence of this people, you are desired to use your interest and influence to support said petition, that it may have its desired effect; and you are further directed to employ Arthur Lee as counsel upon this occasion, and any other counsel you may think proper.

You are desired also to take effectual care, that the several petitions, relative to the governor and judges of the Superior Court receiving their support from the crown, independent of the grants of the people, may be (if they have not already been) immediately laid before his Majesty, and strenuously supported; as they are matters that very nearly and essentially affect our happy constitution, the preservation of which in a great measure depends upon their meeting with a favorable reception and answer. I have the honor to be, &c.

THOMAS CUSHING,
Speaker.

* See the Resolves and Petition, Vol. IV. pp. 426, 430

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Controversy with Governor Hutchinson. — Resolves of the Virginia House of Burgesses. — Dr. Franklin justifies himself against the Charge of Neglect, as Agent for Massachusetts. — Arthur Lee.

London, 7 July, 1773.

SIR,

I thank you for the pamphlets you have sent me, containing the controversy between the governor and the two Houses. I have distributed them where I thought they might be of use. He makes perhaps as much of his argument as it will bear; but has the misfortune of being on the weak side, and so is put to shifts and quibbles, and the use of much sophistry and artifice, to give plausibility to his reasonings. The Council and the Assembly have greatly the advantage in point of fairness, perspicuity, and force. His precedents of acts of Parliament binding the colonies, and our tacit consent to those acts, are all frivolous. Shall a guardian, who has imposed upon, cheated, and plundered a minor under his care, who was unable to prevent it, plead those impositions after his ward has discovered them, as precedents and authorities for continuing them. There have been precedents, time out of mind, for robbing on Hounslow Heath, but the highwayman, who robbed there yesterday, does nevertheless deserve hanging.

I am glad to see the resolves of the Virginia House of Burgesses.* There are brave spirits among that

* The resolves appointing a Committee of Correspondence, and requesting the legislatures of the other colonies to do the same, for the purpose of promoting a mutual intercourse. These resolves were passed on the 12th of March, 1773; and, as the plan was generally adopted

people. I hope their proposal will be readily complied with by all the colonies. It is natural to suppose, as you do, that, if the oppressions continue, a congress may grow out of that correspondence. Nothing would more alarm our ministers; but, if the colonies agree to hold a congress, I do not see how it can be prevented.

The instruction relating to the exemption of the commissioners I imagine is withdrawn; perhaps the other also, relating to the agents, but of that I have heard nothing. I only wonder that the governor should make such a declaration of his readiness to comply with an intimation in acting contrary to any instructions, if he had not already, or did not soon expect a repeal of those instructions. I have not and shall never use your name on this or any similar occasion.

I note your directions relating to public and private letters, and shall not fail to observe them. At the same time I think all the correspondence should be in the Speaker's power, to communicate such extracts only as he should think proper for the House. It is extremely embarrassing to an agent, to write letters concerning his transactions with ministers, which letters he knows are to be read in the House, where there may be governor's spies, who carry away parts, or perhaps take copies, that are echoed back hither privately; if they should not be, as sometimes they are, printed in the Votes. It is impossible to write freely in such circumstances, unless he would hazard his usefulness, and put it out of his power to do his country any farther service. I speak this now, not upon my

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by the other colonies, it became a very important instrument in effecting a union, and carrying forward concerted measures in the early stages of the Revolution. See the Resolves in WIRT's *Life of Patrick Henry*, 3d ed. p. 87.

own account, being about to decline all public business, but for your consideration with regard to future agents.

And, now we speak of agents, I must mention my concern, that I should fall under so severe a censure of the House, as that of neglect in their business. I have submitted to the reproof without reply in my public letter, out of pure respect. It is not decent to dispute a father's admonitions. But to you in private, permit me to observe, that, as to the two things I am blamed for not giving the earliest notice of, viz. the clause in the act relating to dockyards, and the appointment of salaries for the governor and judges, the first only seems to have some foundation. I did not know, but perhaps I ought to have known, that such a clause was intended. And yet in a Parliament, that during the whole session refused admission to strangers, wherein near two hundred acts were passed, it is not so easy a matter to come at the knowledge of every clause in every act, and to give opposition to what may affect one's constituents; especially when it is not uncommon to smuggle clauses into a bill, whose title shall give no suspicion, when an opposition to such clauses is apprehended. I say this is no easy matter. But, had I known of this clause, it is not likely I could have prevented its passing in the present disposition of government towards America; nor do I see, that my giving earlier notice of its having passed could have been of much service.

As to the other, concerning the governor and judges, I should hardly have thought of sending the House an account of it, if the minister had mentioned it to me; as I understood from their first letter to me, that they had already the best intelligence "of its being determined by administration to bestow large salaries on the attorney-general, judges, and governor of the

province." I could not therefore possibly "give the *first notice* of this impending evil." I answered, however, "that there was no doubt of the intention of making governors, and some other officers, independent of the people for their support; and that this purpose will be persisted in, if the American revenue is found sufficient to defray the salaries." This censure, though grievous, does not so much surprise me, as I apprehended all along from the beginning, that between the friends of an old agent, my predecessor, who thought himself hardly used in his dismission, and those of a young one impatient for the succession, my situation was not likely to be a very comfortable one, as my faults could scarce pass unobserved.*

* The young agent here mentioned, as "impatient for the succession," was Arthur Lee. This gentleman was a brother of Richard Henry Lee, and, having studied law in the Temple, he commenced the practice of his profession in London. When Dr. Franklin was appointed agent for Massachusetts, he expected to return in a short time to America; and, in anticipation of this event, Arthur Lee was chosen by the legislature as his successor, with instructions to act as such in case of his death or absence. Circumstances caused Dr. Franklin to remain much longer than he had proposed, and, from Mr. Lee's own testimony, it is evident that his patience was severely tried by this delay. As no man has done so much as Arthur Lee to injure the reputation of Dr. Franklin, and as his name will often occur in the course of this correspondence, it is proper that the reader should here be made acquainted with some of the means he used, at this early period, to effect an object, which he afterwards pursued with an uncommon degree of acrimony and perseverance. In a letter to Samuel Adams, dated at London, June 10th, 1771, he wrote as follows.

"I have read lately in your papers an assurance from Dr. Franklin, that all designs against the charter of the colony are laid aside. This is just what I expected from him; and, if it be true, the Doctor is not the dupe but the instrument of Lord Hillsborough's treachery. That Lord Hillsborough gives out this assurance is certain; but, notorious as he is for ill faith and fraud, his duplicity would not impose on one possessed of half Dr. Franklin's sagacity."

"The possession of a profitable office at will, the having a son in a high post at pleasure, the grand purpose of his residence here being to effect a change in the government of Pennsylvania, for which admin-

I think of leaving England in September. As soon as possible after my arrival in America, I purpose, God willing, to visit Boston, when I hope to have the pleasure of paying my respects to you. I shall then give every information in my power, and offer every advice relating to our affairs, not so convenient to be written, that my situation here for so many years may enable me to suggest for the benefit of our country. Some time before my departure, I shall put your papers into the hands of Mr. Lee, and assist him with my counsel

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istration must be cultivated and courted, are circumstances, which, joined with the temporizing conduct he has always held in American affairs, preclude every rational hope, that, in an open contest between an oppressive administration and a free people, Dr. Franklin can be a faithful advocate for the latter; or oppose and expose the former with a spirit and integrity, which alone can, in times like these, be of any service. By temporizing, I mean, consulting the inclination of ministers, and acting conformably to that, not to the interests of the province. Thus, when the Rockingham administration espoused the American cause, no man was more zealous or active than Dr. Franklin; since that, he has been totally inactive; and his particular partisans here, the Quaker merchants, were opposed to the late measure of petitioning for the repeal of the revenue act; though the exciting the merchants and manufacturers here to petition against it was the great benefit expected from the non-importation agreements with you, which the Doctor immediately after advised the Philadelphians not to violate. The artifice of this is manifest; that advice made him popular in America, his preventing the effect of it recommended him to administration here; and in consequence we see, that, though accounts of that letter were transmitted to Lord Hillsborough, the writer stands in the same place and favor as before, though it is a fixed rule of conduct with his Lordship to displace all those, who not only oppose, but who do not conform perfectly to his plan. I feel it not a little disagreeable to speak my sentiments of Dr. Franklin, as your generous confidence has placed me in the light of a rival to him. But I am so far from being influenced by selfish motives, that, were the service of the colony ten times greater I would perform it for nothing rather than you and America, at a time like this, should be betrayed by a man, who it is hardly in the nature of things to suppose can be faithful to his trust." — *Life of Arthur Lee*, Vol. I. p. 216.

It is but just to add, that, at a later period, Mr. Lee said the above letter "was written in anger"; but this is no apology for the gross

while I stay, where there may be any occasion for it. He is a gentleman of parts and ability; and, though he cannot exceed me in sincere zeal for the interest and prosperity of the province, his youth will easily enable him to serve it with more activity. I am, Sir, very respectfully, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

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insinuations it contains, and the more than suspicious end he had in view. The whole tenor of the correspondence in this work, and especially the preceding letters relating to the subjects and time of which Mr. Lee speaks, prove these insinuations (charges indeed they may almost be called) to have been utterly without foundation. In Dr. Franklin's letter to Dr. Cooper, dated February 5th, 1771, it is seen, that, so far from his being subservient to Lord Hillsborough, there was a coldness between them amounting almost to a personal quarrel. Yet these calumnies were sent across the Atlantic to poison the minds of the principal men in Massachusetts, and to inflict an injury, which it was not in Mr. Lee's power to repair. Such was the result, to a considerable extent; and we may here see the origin of the false impressions respecting the motives and character of Dr. Franklin, which long existed in Massachusetts, and which were subsequently strengthened by other means not less unfounded or unworthy.

Mr. Lee's *impatience* is indicated in another letter, dated June 11th, 1773, in which he says; "Dr. Franklin frequently assures me, that he shall sail for Philadelphia in a few weeks; but I believe he will not quit us till he is gathered to his fathers."

As an evidence of the freedom with which he spoke of other agents in England, and of his impatience to occupy their place, an extract may be quoted from a letter to his brother, dated September 18th, 1769. It relates to the agent for Virginia. He says; "You will see our agent on the most infamous list of voters for Colonels Lutterel and Brentford, than which nothing can more demonstrate his servile dependence on administration; when applied to, he refused to draw up for the tobacco merchants a petition against the revenue acts, on a pretence, that, as they had not treated him with respect, he would not have any thing to do with them. But his vote will explain his refusal. Should this conduct have any influence in Virginia to his prejudice, as I think in truth it ought, I need not tell you I should be happy to serve in his place."

The value of his opinions of men, as well as the soundness of his judgment, may be inferred from the manner in which he speaks of the prominent men in the British government. He writes to his brother; "Grafton is the premier, profligate, arbitrary, and contemptible. Weymouth, abandoned to gaming and drinking, totally involved, but extreme-

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Parliament prorogued. — The King's Answer to the American Petitions. — Proposed Means of obtaining Redress. — General Sentiments of the People in England respecting America. — Captain Calef. — Sir Francis Bernard's Project.

London, 7 July, 1773.

SIR,

The Parliament is at length prorogued, without meddling with the state of America. Their time was much employed in the East India business; and perhaps it was not thought prudent to lay before them the advices from New England, though some threatening in-

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ly clever; North, Gower, and Bristol, nothing; Hillsborough and Pownall, arbitrary, opinionated, subtile, and severe." — *Life*, Vol. I. p. 200.

Again; "Lord Dartmouth is too insignificant for you to regard what he says." p. 222. "He is a poor wretch, and, though not actively bad, is yet, I believe, as capable of adopting any unjust and arbitrary measure as Lord Hillsborough. He forfeited his honor and his character in accepting the place." p. 232.

Considering the means taken by Arthur Lee to disparage Dr. Franklin, from the beginning of the revolution to the end of his life, as will fully appear hereafter, justice requires, that the reader should be apprized beforehand of the traits of his character shown in the above extracts. But these should not detract from the real merits of Mr. Lee. He was a man of talents, a good scholar, an able writer, and a zealous defender of his country's rights. Before the war broke out, he published several papers on the colonial controversy, written with force and skill, some of which passed through various editions, and were widely circulated in Great Britain and America. They were useful in promoting the cause of his country. His integrity, patriotism, and fidelity to the trusts reposed in him, have never been suspected; but the infirmities of his temper, his jealousy, and extreme ambition led him to look upon every man as an enemy, who stood in the way of his advancement, and to employ methods, that cannot be justified, for lessening the influence of those, whom he regarded as his opponents. Further particulars, relating to this subject, may be seen in the *North American Review* for April, 1830, Vol. XXX, pp. 457 — 511.

timations had been given of such an intention. The King's firm answer, as it is called, to our petitions and remonstrances, has probably been judged sufficient for the present. I forwarded that answer to you by the last packet, and sent a copy of it by a Boston ship the beginning of last month. Therein we are told, that "his Majesty has well weighed the *subject matter*, and the expressions, contained in those petitions; and that, as he will ever attend to the *humble* petitions of his subjects, and be forward to redress every *real* grievance, so he is determined to support *the constitution*, and resist with firmness every attempt to derogate from the authority of the *supreme legislature*."

By this it seems that some exception is taken to the *expressions* of the petitions, as not sufficiently humble, that the grievances complained of are not thought *real* grievances, that Parliament is deemed the supreme legislature, and its authority over the colonies supposed to be the *constitution*. Indeed, the last idea is expressed more fully in the next paragraph, where the words of the act are used, declaring the right of the crown, with the advice of Parliament, to make laws of *sufficient force and validity* to bind its subjects in America *in all cases whatsoever*.

When one considers the King's situation, surrounded by ministers, counsellors, and judges, learned in the law, who are all of this opinion, and reflects how necessary it is for him to be well with his Parliament, from whose yearly grants his fleets and armies are to be supported, and the deficiencies of his civil list supplied, it is not to be wondered at, that he should be firm in an opinion established, as far as an act of Parliament could establish it, by even the friends of America at the time they repealed the Stamp Act; and which is so generally thought right by his Lords and

Commons, that any act of his, countenancing the contrary, would hazard his embroiling himself with those powerful bodies. And from hence it seems hardly to be expected from him, that he should take any step of that kind. The grievous instructions, indeed, might be withdrawn without their observing it, if his Majesty thought fit so to do; but, under the present prejudices of all about him, it seems that this is not yet likely to be advised.

The question then arises, How are we to obtain redress? If we look back into the Parliamentary history of this country, we shall find, that, in similar situations of the subjects here, redress would seldom be obtained but by withholding aids when the sovereign was in distress, till the grievances were removed. Hence the rooted custom of the Commons to keep money bills in their own disposition, not suffering even the Lords to meddle in grants, either as to quantity, manner of raising, or even in the smallest circumstance. This country pretends to be collectively our sovereign. It is now deeply in debt. Its funds are far short of recovering their par since the last war; another would distress it still more. Its people diminish, as well as its credit. Men will be wanted, as well as money. The colonies are rapidly increasing in wealth and numbers. In the last war they maintained an army of twenty-five thousand. A country, able to do that, is no contemptible ally. In another war they may perhaps do twice as much with equal ease. Whenever a war happens, our aid will be wished for, our friendship desired and cultivated, our good will courted. Then is the time to say, "*Redress our grievances.* You take money from us by force, and now you ask it of voluntary grant. You cannot have it both ways. If you choose to have it without our consent, you must

go on taking it that way, and be content with what little you can so obtain. If you would have our free gifts, desist from your compulsive methods, and acknowledge our rights, and secure our future enjoyment of them." Our claims will then be attended to, and our complaints regarded.

By what I perceived not long since, when a war was apprehended with Spain, the different countenance put on by some great men here towards those who were thought to have a little influence in America, and the language that began to be held with regard to the then minister for the colonies, I am confident, that, if that war had taken place, he would have been immediately dismissed, all his measures reversed, and every step taken to recover our affection and procure our assistance. Thence I think it fair to conclude, that similar effects will probably be produced by similar circumstances.

But, as the strength of an empire depends not only on the *union* of its parts, but on their *readiness* for united exertion of their common force; and as the discussion of rights may seem unseasonable in the commencement of actual war, and the delay it might occasion be prejudicial to the common welfare; as likewise the refusal of one or a few colonies would not be so much regarded, if the others granted liberally, which perhaps by various artifices and motives they might be prevailed on to do; and as this want of concert would defeat the expectation of general redress, that otherwise might be justly formed; perhaps it would be best and fairest for the colonies, in a general congress now in peace to be assembled, or by means of the correspondence lately proposed, after a full and solemn assertion and declaration of their rights, to engage firmly with each other, that they will never grant

aids to the crown in any general war, till those rights are recognised by the King and both Houses of Parliament; communicating at the same time to the crown this their resolution. Such a step I imagine will bring the dispute to a crisis; and, whether our demands are immediately complied with, or compulsory measures thought of to make us rescind them, our ends will finally be obtained; for even the odium accompanying such compulsory attempts will contribute to unite and strengthen us, and in the mean time all the world will allow, that our proceeding has been honorable.

No one doubts the advantage of a strict union between the mother country and the colonies, if it may be obtained and preserved on equitable terms. In every fair connexion, each party should find its own interest. Britain will find hers in our joining with her in every war she makes, to the greater annoyance and terror of her enemies; in our employment of her manufactures, and enriching her merchants by our commerce; and her government will feel some additional strengthening of its hands by the disposition of our profitable posts and places. On our side, we have to expect the protection she can afford us, and the advantage of a common umpire in our disputes, thereby preventing wars we might otherwise have with each other; so that we can without interruption go on with our improvements, and increase our numbers. We ask no more of her, and she should not think of forcing more from us.

By the exercise of prudent moderation on her part, mixed with a little kindness; and by a decent behaviour on ours, excusing where we can excuse from a consideration of circumstances, and bearing a little with the infirmities of her government, as we would with those of an aged parent, though firmly asserting our

privileges, and declaring that we mean at a proper time to vindicate them, this advantageous union may still be long continued. We wish it, and we may endeavour it; but God will order it as to his wisdom shall seem most suitable. The friends of liberty here wish we may long preserve it on our side of the water, that they may find it there, if adverse events should destroy it here. They are therefore anxious and afraid, lest we should hazard it by premature attempts in its favor. They think we may risk much by violent measures, and that the risk is unnecessary, since a little time must infallibly bring us all we demand or desire, and bring it to us in peace and safety. I do not presume to advise. There are many wiser men among you, and I hope you will be directed by a still superior wisdom.

With regard to the sentiments of people in general here, concerning America, I must say, that we have among them many friends and wellwishers. The Dissenters are all for us, and many of the merchants and manufacturers. There seems to be, even among the country gentlemen, a general sense of our growing importance, a disapprobation of the harsh measures with which we have been treated, and a wish that some means may be found of perfect reconciliation. A few members of Parliament in both Houses, and perhaps some in high office, have in a degree the same ideas; but none of these seem willing as yet to be active in our favor, lest adversaries should take advantage, and charge it upon them as a betraying the interests of this nation. In this state of things, no endeavour of mine, or our other friends here, "to obtain a repeal of the acts so oppressive to the colonists, or the orders of the crown so destructive of the charter rights of our province in particular, can expect a sudden suc-

cess." By degrees, and a judicious improvement of events, we may work a change in minds and measures; but otherwise such great alterations are hardly to be looked for.

I am thankful to the House for their kind attention, in repeating their grant to me of six hundred pounds. Whether the instruction restraining the governor's assent is withdrawn or not, or is likely to be, I cannot tell, having never solicited or even once mentioned it to Lord Dartmouth, being resolved to owe no obligation to the favor of any minister. If, from a sense of right, that instruction should be recalled, and the general principle on which it was founded is given up, all will be very well; but you can never think it worth while to employ an agent here, if his being paid or not is to depend on the breath of a minister, and I should think it a situation too suspicious, and therefore too dishonorable for me to remain in a single hour. Living frugally, I am under no immediate necessity; and, if I serve my constituents faithfully, though it should be unsuccessfully, I am confident they will always have it in their inclination, and some time or other in their power, to make their grants effectual.

A gentleman of our province, Captain Calef, is come hither as an agent for some of the eastern townships, to obtain a confirmation of their lands. Sir Francis Bernard seems inclined to make use of this person's application for promoting a separation of that country from your province, and making it a distinct government; to which purpose he prepared a draft of a memorial for Calef to present, setting forth not only the hardship of being without security in the property of their improvements, but also of the distress of the people there for want of government; that they were at too great a distance from that of the government in

the Massachusetts to be capable of receiving the benefits of government from thence, and expressing their willingness to be separated and formed into a new province, &c.

With this draft Sir Francis and Mr. Calef came to me to have my opinion. I read it, and observed to them, that, though I wished the people quieted in their possessions, and would do any thing I could to assist in obtaining the assurance of their property, yet, as I knew the province of Massachusetts had a right to that country, of which they were justly tenacious, I must oppose that part of the memorial, if it should be presented. Sir Francis allowed the right, but proposed that a great tract of land between Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers, which had been allotted to New Hampshire, might be restored to our province, by order of the crown, as a compensation. This, he said, would be of more value to us than that eastern country, as being nearer home, &c. I said, I would mention it in my letters, but must in the mean time oppose any step taken in the affair, before the sentiments of the General Court should be known as to such an exchange, if it were offered. Mr. Calef himself did not seem fond of the draft, and I have not seen him or heard any thing farther of it since; but I shall watch it.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the House, and believe me with sincere and great esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

TO SAMUEL MATHER.*

Dissenters' Petition. — Discovery of America by Europeans before Columbus. — Remarks on the Proceedings against America.

London, 7 July, 1773.

Reverend Sir,

By a line of the 4th past, I acknowledged the receipt of your favor of March 18th, and sent you with it two pamphlets. I now add another, a spirited address to the Bishops, who opposed the Dissenters' petition. It is written by a dissenting minister at York. There is preserved at the end of it a little fugitive piece of mine on the same occasion.

I perused your tracts with pleasure. I see you inherit all the various learning of your famous ancestors, Cotton and Increase Mather. The father, Increase, I once heard preach at the Old South Meeting for Mr. Pemberton; and I remember his mentioning the death of "that wicked old persecutor of God's people, Louis the Fourteenth;" of which news had just been received; but which proved premature. I was some years afterwards at his house at the North End, on some errand to him, and remember him sitting in an easy chair, apparently very old and feeble. But Cotton I remember in the vigor of his preaching and usefulness.

You have made the most of your argument, to prove that America might be known to the ancients. There is another discovery of it claimed by the Norwegians, which you have not mentioned, unless it be under the words, "of old viewed and observed," page 7. About

* A clergyman of Boston, and son of the celebrated Cotton Mather

twenty-five years since, Professor Kalm, a learned Swede, was with us in Pennsylvania. He contended, that America was discovered by their northern people, long before the time of Columbus; which I doubting, he drew up and gave me some time after a note of those discoveries, which I send you enclosed. It is his own handwriting, and his own English; very intelligible for the time he had been among us. The circumstances give the account a great appearance of authenticity. And if one may judge by the description of the winter, the country they visited should be southward of New England, supposing no change since that time of the climate. But, if it be true, as Krantz, I think, and some other historians tell us, that old Greenland, once inhabited and populous, is now rendered uninhabited by ice, it should seem that almost perpetual northern winter had gained ground to the southward; and, if so, perhaps more northern countries might anciently have had vines, than can bear them in these days.*

The remarks you have added, on the late proceedings against America, are very just and judicious; and I cannot see any impropriety in your making them, though a minister of the gospel. This kingdom is a good deal indebted for its liberties to the public spirit of its ancient clergy, who joined with the barons in obtaining Magna Charta, and joined heartily in forming the curses of excommunication against the infringers of it. There is no doubt but the claim of Parliament, of authority to make laws *binding on the colonies in all cases whatsoever*, includes an authority to change our religious constitution, and establish Popery

* For the arguments in proof of the discovery of America by navigators from the north of Europe, see WHEATON's *History of the Northmen*, p. 24; and the *North American Review*, for January, 1838.

or Mahomedanism, if they please, in its stead; but, as you intimate, *power* does not infer *right;* and, as the *right* is nothing, and the *power*, by our increase, continually diminishing, the one will soon be as insignificant as the *other*. You seem only to have made a small mistake, in supposing they modestly avoided to declare they had a right, the words of the act being, "that they have and of *right* ought to have, full power, &c."

Your suspicion that sundry others, besides Governor Bernard, "had written hither their opinions and counsels, encouraging the late measures to the prejudice of our country, which have been too much heeded and followed," is, I apprehend, but too well founded. You call them "traitorous individuals," whence I collect, that you suppose them of our own country. There was among the twelve Apostles one traitor, who betrayed with a kiss. It should be no wonder, therefore, if among so many thousand true patriots, as New England contains, there should be found even twelve Judases ready to betray their country for a few paltry pieces of silver. Their *ends*, as well as their views, ought to be similar. But all the oppressions evidently work for our good. Providence seems by every means intent on making us a great people. May our virtues public and private grow with us, and be durable, that liberty, civil and religious, may be secured to our posterity, and to all from every part of the Old World that take refuge among us.

With great esteem, and my best wishes for a long continuance of your usefulness, I am, Reverend Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Unanimity of the People of Massachusetts in the Sentiments of Liberty. — Hutchinson's Letters.

London, 7 July, 1773.

Dear Sir,

I received your very valuable favors of March 15th and April 23d. It rejoices me to find your health so far restored, that your friends can again be benefited by your correspondence.

The governor was certainly out in his politics, if he hoped to recommend himself there, by entering upon that dispute with the Assembly. His imprudence in bringing it at all upon the *tapis*, and his bad management of it, are almost equally censured. The Council and Assembly on the other hand have, by the coolness, clearness, and force of their answers, gained great reputation.

The unanimity of our towns, in their sentiments of liberty, gives me great pleasure, as it shows the generally enlightened state of our people's minds, and the falsehood of the opinion, much cultivated here by the partisans of arbitrary power in America, that only a small faction among us were discontented with the late measures. If that unanimity can be discovered in all the colonies, it will give much greater weight to our future remonstrances. I heartily wish, with you, that some line could be drawn, some bill of rights established for America, that might secure peace between the two countries, so necessary for the prosperity of both. But I think little attention is like to be afforded by our ministers to that salutary work, till the breach becomes greater and more alarming, and then the difficulty of repairing it will be greater in a tenfold proportion.

You mention the surprise of gentlemen, to whom those letters have been communicated,* at the restrictions with which they were accompanied, and which they suppose render them incapable of answering any important end. One great reason of forbidding their publication was an apprehension, that it might put all the possessors of such correspondence here upon their guard, and so prevent the obtaining more of it. And it was imagined, that showing the originals to so many as were named, and to a few such others as they might think fit, would be sufficient to establish their authenticity, and to spread through the province so just an estimation of the writers, as to strip them of all their deluded friends, and demolish effectually their interest and influence. The letters might be shown even to some of the governor's and lieutenant-governor's partisans, and spoken of to everybody; for there was no restraint proposed to talking of them, but only to copying. However, the terms given with them could only be those with which they were received.

The great defect here is, in all sorts of people, a want of attention to what passes in such remote countries as America; an unwillingness to read any thing about them if it appears a little lengthy, and a disposition to postpone the consideration even of the things they know they must at last consider, that so they may have time for what more immediately concerns them, and withal enjoy their amusements, and be undisturbed in the universal dissipation. In other respects, though some of the great regard us with a jealous eye, and some are angry with us, the majority of the nation rather wish us well, and have no desire to in-

* Governor Hutchinson's Letters.

fringe our liberties. And many console themselves under the apprehension of declining liberty here, that they or their posterity shall be able to find her safe and vigorous in America. With sincere and great esteem, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO SAMUEL FRANKLIN.

London, 7 July, 1773.

Dear Cousin,

I received your kind letter of November 6th, and was glad to hear of the welfare of yourself and family, which I hope continues. Sally Franklin is lately married to Mr. James Pierce, a substantial young farmer at Elwell, about thirteen miles from London, a very sober, industrious man; and I think it is likely to prove a good match, as she is likewise an industrious, good girl.

I would not have you be discouraged at the little dulness of business, which is only occasional. A close attention to your shop, and application to business, will always secure more than an equal share, because every competitor will not have those qualities. Some of them, therefore, must give way to you; and the constant growth of the country will increase the trade of all, that steadily stand ready for it. I send you a little piece of mine, which more particularly explains these sentiments.

My love to your good wife and daughters, and believe me ever your affectionate cousin,

B. Franklin.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Meeting with Lord North at Lord Le Despencer's. — Lord Dartmouth. — Anecdote of Lord Hillsborough.

London, 14 July, 1773.

Dear Son,

I am glad to find by yours of May 4th, that you have been able to assist Josiah Davenport a little; but vexed that he and you should think of putting me upon a solicitation, which it is impossible for me to engage in. I am not upon terms with Lord North, to ask any such favor from him. Displeased with something he said relating to America, I have never been at his levees, since the first. Perhaps he has taken that amiss. For the last week we met occasionally at Lord Le Despencer's, in our return from Oxford, where I had been to attend the solemnity of his installation, and he seemed studiously to avoid speaking to me. I ought to be ashamed to say, that on such occasions I feel myself to be as proud as anybody. His lady indeed was more gracious. She came, and sat down by me on the same sofa, and condescended to enter into a conversation with me agreeably enough, as if to make some amends. Their son and daughter were with them. They stayed all night, so that we dined, supped, and breakfasted together, without exchanging three sentences. But, had he ever so great a regard for me, I could not ask that office, trifling as it is, for any relation of mine. And, detesting as I do the whole system of American customs, believing they will one day bring on a breach, through the indiscretion and insolence of those concerned in the collection, I should never wish to see one so near to me in that business. If you think him capable of

acting as deputy secretary, I imagine you might easily obtain that for him of Mr. Morgan.

He has lately been with me, is always very complaisant, and, understanding I was about returning to America, requested my interest to obtain for him the *agency for your province.* His friend, Sir Watkin Lewes, who was formerly candidate for the same *great place*, is now high sheriff of London, and in the way of being Lord Mayor. The new sheriffs elect are (could you think it?) both Americans, viz. Mr. Sayre, the New Yorker, and Mr. William Lee, brother to Dr. Lee. I am glad you stand so well with Lord Dartmouth. I am likewise well with him, but he never spoke to me of augmenting your salary. He is truly a good man, and wishes sincerely a good understanding with the colonies, but does not seem to have strength equal to his wishes. Between you and me, the late measures have been, I suspect, very much the King's own, and he has in some cases a great share of what his friends call *firmness.* Yet, by some painstaking and proper management, the wrong impressions he has received may be removed, which is perhaps the only chance America has for obtaining *soon* the redress she aims at. This entirely to yourself.

And, now we are among great folks, let me tell you a little of Lord Hillsborough. I went down to Oxford with and at the instance of Lord Le Despencer, who is on all occasions very good to me, and seems of late very desirous of my company. Mr. Todd too was there, who has some attachment to Lord Hillsborough, and, in a walk we were taking, told me, as a secret, that Lord Hillsborough was much chagrined at being out of place, and could never forgive me for writing that pamphlet against his Report about the Ohio. "I assured him," says Mr. Todd, "that I knew you did

not write it; and the consequence is, that he thinks I know the contrary, and wanted to impose upon him in your favor; and so I find he is now displeased with me, and for no other cause in the world." His friend Bamber Gascoign, too, says, that they *well know* it was written by Dr. Franklin, who was one of the most mischievous men in England.

That same day Lord Hillsborough called upon Lord Le Despencer, whose chamber and mine were together in Queen's College. I was in the inner room shifting, and heard his voice, but did not see him, as he went down stairs immediately with Lord Le Despencer, who mentioning that I was above, he returned directly and came to me in the pleasantest manner imaginable. "Dr. Franklin," said he, "I did not know till this minute that you were here, and I am come back *to make you my bow.* I am glad to see you at Oxford, and that you look so well," &c. In return for this extravagance, I complimented him on his son's performance in the theatre, though indeed it was but indifferent, so that account was settled. For as people say, when they are angry, *If he strikes me, I'll strike him again;* I think sometimes it may be right to say, *If he flatters me, I'll flatter him again.* This is *lex talionis,* returning offences in kind. His son, however, (Lord Fairford,) is a valuable young man, and his daughters, Ladies Mary and Charlotte, most amiable young women. My quarrel is only with him, who, of all the men I ever met with, is surely the most unequal in his treatment of people, the most insincere, and the most wrongheaded; witness, besides his various behaviour to me, his duplicity in encouraging us to ask for more land, *ask for enough to make a province* (when we at first asked only for two millions five hundred thousand acres), were his words. pretending

to befriend our application, then doing every thing to defeat it; and reconciling the first to the last, by saying to a friend, that he meant to defeat it from the beginning; and that his putting us upon asking so much was with that very view, supposing it too much to be granted. Thus, by the way, his mortification becomes double. He has served us by the very means he meant to destroy us, and tripped up his own heels into the bargain. Your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

TO SAMUEL DANFORTH.

London, 25 July, 1773.

Dear Sir,

It gave me great pleasure to receive so cheerful an epistle from a friend of half a century's standing, and to see him commencing life anew in so valuable a son. I hope the young gentleman's patent will be as beneficial to him, as his invention must be to the public.

I see by the papers, that you continue to afford that public your services, which makes me almost ashamed of my resolutions for retirement. But this exile, though an honorable one, is become grievous to me, in so long a separation from my family, friends, and country; all which you happily enjoy; and long may you continue to enjoy them. I hope for the great pleasure of once more seeing and conversing with you; and, though living on in one's children, as we both may do, is a good thing, I cannot but fancy it might be better to continue living ourselves at the same time. I rejoice, therefore, in your kind intentions of including me in the benefits of that inestimable stone, which, curing all diseases (even old age

itself), will enable us to see the future glorious state of our America, enjoying in full security her own liberties, and offering in her bosom a participation of them to all the oppressed of other nations. I anticipate the jolly conversation we and twenty more of our friends may have a hundred years hence on this subject, over that well replenished bowl at Cambridge Commencement. I am, dear Sir, for an age to come, and for ever, with sincere esteem and respect, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN WINTHROP.

Prudence and Moderation recommended in the political Movements of the Colonies.

London, 25 July, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad to see, that you are elected into the Council, and are about to take part in our public affairs. Your abilities, integrity, and sober attachment to the liberties of our country, will be of great use in this tempestuous time in conducting our little bark into safe harbour. By the Boston newspapers, there seems to be among us some violent spirits, who are for an immediate rupture. But I trust the general prudence of our country will see, that by our growing strength we advance fast to a situation in which our claims must be allowed; that by a premature struggle we may be crippled, and kept down another age; that, as between friends, every affront is not worth a duel, between nations every injury not worth a war, so between the governed and governing every mistake in government, every encroachment on right, is not worth a rebellion.

It is in my opinion sufficient for the present, that we hold them forth on all occasions, not giving up any of them, using at the same time every means to make them generally understood and valued by the people; cultivating a harmony among the colonies, that their union in the same sentiments may give them greater weight; remembering withal, that this Protestant country (our mother, though lately an unkind one,) is worth preserving, and that her weight in the scale of Europe, and her safety in a great degree, may depend on our union with her. Thus conducting, I am confident we may in a few years obtain every allowance of, and every security for, our inestimable privileges, that we can wish or desire. With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Printing of Hutchinson's Letters.

London, 25 July, 1773.

Sir,

I am favored with yours of June 14th and 16th, containing some copies of the resolves of the committee upon the letters.* I see by your account of the transaction, that you could not well prevent what was done. As to the report of other copies being come from England, I know that could not be. It was an expedient to disengage the House. I hope the possession of the originals, and the proceedings upon them, will be attended with salutary effects to the province, and then I shall be well pleased.

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* Resolves concerning Hutchinson's Letters. See Vol. IV. p. 426.

I observe that you mention, that no person besides Dr. Cooper and one of the committee knew they came from me. I did not accompany them with any request of being myself concealed; for, believing what I did to be in the way of my duty as agent, though I had no doubt of its giving offence, not only to the parties exposed, but to administration here, I was regardless of the consequences. However, since the letters themselves are now copied and printed, contrary to the promise I made, I am glad my name has not been heard on the occasion; and, as I do not see it could be of any use to the public, I now wish it may continue unknown; though I hardly expect it. As to yours, you may rely on my never mentioning it, except that I may be obliged to show your letter in my own vindication to the person only, who might otherwise think he had reason to blame *me* for breach of engagement. It must surely be seen here, that, after such a detection of their duplicity, in pretending a regard and affection to the province, while they were undermining its privileges, it is impossible for the crown to make any good use of their services, and that it can never be for its interest to employ servants, who are under such universal odium. The consequence, one would think, should be their removal. But perhaps it may be to titles, or to pensions, if your revenue can pay them. I am, with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Hutchinson's Letters.

London, 25 July, 1773.

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you on the 7th instant pretty fully, and am since favored with yours of June 14th. I am much pleased with the proposal of the Virginia Assembly, and the respectful manner in which it has been received by ours. I think it likely to produce very salutary effects.*

I am glad to know your opinion, that those letters came seasonably, and may be of public utility. I accompanied them with no restriction relating to myself. My duty to the province, as their agent, I thought required the communication of them, as far as I could. I was sensible I should make enemies there, and perhaps I might offend government here; but those apprehensions I disregarded. I did not expect, that my sending them could be kept a secret; but since it is such hitherto, I now wish it may continue so, because the publication of the letters, contrary to my engagement, has changed the circumstances. If they serve to diminish the influence and demolish the power of the parties, whose correspondence has been, and probably would have continued to be, so mischievous to the interest and rights of the province, I shall on that account be more easy under any inconveniences I may suffer, either here or there; and shall bear, as well as I can, the imputation of not having taken sufficient care to insure the performance of my promise.

* The Virginia resolves for appointing a Committee of Correspondence arrived in Boston a short time before the assembling of the legislature. The first business after the meeting was to accede to the proposal of Virginia, and to appoint a Committee of Correspondence.

I think government can hardly expect to draw any future service from such instruments, and one would suppose they must soon be dismissed. We shall see.

I hope to be favored with the continuance of your correspondence and intelligence, while I stay here; it is highly useful to me, and will be, as it always has been, pleasing everywhere. I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Address of Massachusetts for the Removal of their Governor and Lieutenant-Governor.

London, 24 August, 1773.

Sir,

I received duly your several favors of June 25th, 26th, and 30th, with the papers enclosed. My Lord Dartmouth being at his country seat in Staffordshire, I transmitted to him the address for the removal of the governor and lieutenant-governor, and Mr. Bollan and I jointly transmitted the letter to his Lordship from both Houses. I delivered to Mr. Bollan one set of the authenticated copies of the letters, and we shall coöperate in the business we are charged with.

I am told that the governor has requested leave to come home; that some great persons about the court do not think the letters, now they have seen them, a sufficient foundation for the resolves; that therefore it is not likely he will be removed, but suffered to resign, and that some provision will be made for him here. But nothing, I apprehend, is likely to be done soon, as most of the great officers of state, who composed the privy council, are in the country, and likely to continue till the Parliament meets, and perhaps the above may be chiefly conjecture.

I have informed Mr. Lee, that, in case there should be a hearing, I was directed to engage him as counsel for the province; that, though I had received no money, I would advance what might be necessary; those hearings by counsel being expensive. I purpose writing to you again by the packet, and am with the greatest respect, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

P. S. No determination is yet public on the case of Mr. Lewis against Governor Wentworth, which has been a very costly hearing to both sides.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Resolutions of the New England Townships. — Project to form a Union with Ireland. — Hutchinson's Letters.

London, 1 September, 1773.

DEAR SON,

I have now before me yours of July 5th and 6th. The August packet is not yet arrived. Dr. Cooper of New York's opinion of the author of the Sermon,

* On the 1st of September he wrote very briefly to Mr. Cushing as follows. "In my last I informed you, that the address to the King, and the letter from the General Court to Lord Dartmouth, are both transmitted to his Lordship. Enclosed are copies of his answers to Mr. Bollan and myself. There are some expressions in the close of his Lordship's letter to me, that have a favorable appearance, and therefore I take this first opportunity of communicating it."

In the letter here alluded to, dated August 25th, Lord Dartmouth said; "I cannot help expressing to you the pleasure it gives me to hear, that a sincere disposition prevails in the people of that province to be on good terms with the mother country, and my earnest hope, that the time is at no great distance, when every ground of uneasiness will cease, and the most perfect tranquillity and happiness be restored to the breasts of that people."

however honorable to me, is injurious to the good Bishop; and therefore I must say, in justice and truth, that I knew nothing of his intention to preach on the subject, and saw not a word of the Sermon till it was printed. Possibly some preceding conversation between us may have turned his thoughts that way; but, if so, that is all.

I think the resolutions of the New England townships must have the effect they seem intended for, viz. to show that the discontents were really general, and their sentiments concerning their rights unanimous, and not the faction of a few demagogues, as their governors used to represent them here; and therefore not useless, though they should not as yet induce government to acknowledge their claims; that people may probably think it sufficient for the present to assert and hold forth their rights, secure, that sooner or later they must be admitted and acknowledged. The declaratory law here had too its use, viz. to prevent or lessen at least a clamor against the ministry, that repealed the Stamp Act, as if they had given up the right of this country to govern America. Other use indeed it could have none; and I remember Lord Mansfield told the Lords, when upon that bill, that it was nugatory. To be sure, in a dispute between two parties about rights, the declaration of one party can never be supposed to bind the other.

It is said there is now a project on foot to form a union with Ireland, and that Lord Harcourt is to propose it at the next meeting of the Irish Parliament. The eastern side of Ireland are averse to it; supposing, that, when Dublin is no longer the seat of their government it will decline, the harbour being but indifferent, and that the western and southern ports will rise and flourish on its ruins, being good in themselves,

and much better situated for commerce. For these same reasons, the western and southern people are inclined to the measure, and it is thought it may be carried. But these are difficult affairs, and usually take longer time than the projectors imagine. Mr. Crowley, the author of several proposals for uniting the colonies with the mother country, and who runs about much among the ministers, tells me, the union of Ireland is only the first step towards a general union. He is for having it done by the Parliament of England, without consulting the colonies, and he will warrant, he says, that if the terms proposed are equitable, they will all come in one after the other. He seems rather a little cracked upon the subject.

It is said here, that the famous Boston letters * were sent chiefly, if not all, to the late Mr. Whately. They fell into my hands, and I thought it my duty to give some principal people there a sight of them, very much with this view, that, when they saw the measures they complained of took their rise in a great degree from the representations and recommendations of their own countrymen, their resentment against Britain on account of those measures might abate, as mine had done, and a reconciliation be more easily obtained. In Boston they concealed who sent them, the better to conceal who received and communicated them. And perhaps it is as well, that it should continue a secret. Being of that country myself, I think those letters more heinous than you seem to think them; but you had not read them all, nor perhaps the Council's remarks on them. I have written to decline their agency, on account of my return to America. Dr. Lee succeeds me. I only keep it while I stay, which perhaps will be another winter.

* Governor Hutchinson's Letters.

I grieve to hear of the death of my good old friend, Dr. Evans. I have lost so many, since I left America, that I begin to fear that I shall find myself a stranger among strangers, when I return. If so, I must come again to my friends in England. I am ever your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Project to avoid repealing the American Tea Duty.

London, 12 September, 1773.

SIR,

The above is a copy of my last, by the packet. Enclosed is the original letter therein mentioned. His Lordship continues in the country, but is expected, Secretary Pownall tells me, the beginning of next month.

To avoid repealing the American tea duty, and yet find a vent for tea, a project is executing to send it from hence on account of the East India Company, to be sold in America, agreeable to a late act, empowering the Lords of the Treasury to grant licenses to the company to export tea thither, under certain restrictions, duty free. Some friends of government, as they are called, in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, &c., are to be favored with the commission, who undertake by their interest to carry the measure through in the colonies. How the other merchants, thus excluded from the tea trade, will like this, I cannot foresee. Their agreement, if I remember right, was not to import tea, till the duty shall be repealed. Perhaps they will think themselves still obliged by that agreement, notwithstanding this temporary expedient; which is only to

introduce the tea for the present, and may be dropped next year, and the duty again required, the granting or refusing such license from time to time remaining in the power of the treasury. And it will seem hard, while their hands are tied, to see the profits of that article all engrossed by a few particulars.

Enclosed I take the liberty of sending you a small piece of mine, written to expose, in as striking a light as I could, to the nation, the absurdity of the measures towards America, and to spur the ministry if possible to a change of those measures.* Please to present my duty to the House, and respects to the Committee. I have the honor to be, with much esteem, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOHN BASKERVILLE.

Sale of Printers' Types. — Sheet of Chinese Paper.

London, 21 September, 1773.

Dear Sir,

I duly received your favor, and some time after the packet containing the specimens, and your valuable present of Shaftesbury, excellently printed, for which I hold myself greatly obliged to you. The specimens I shall distribute by the first ship among the printers of America, and I hope to your advantage. I suppose no orders will come unaccompanied by bills, or money, and I would not advise you to give credit, especially as I do not think it will be necessary.

The sheet of Chinese paper, from its size, is a great curiosity. I see the marks of the mould in it. One

* This piece was probably the "*Rules by which a Great Empire may be reduced to a Small One;*" or "*An Edict of the King of Prussia.*" See Vol. IV. pp. 387, 399.

side is smooth; that, I imagine, is the side that was applied to the smooth side of the kiln on which it was dried. The little ridges on the other side I take to be marks of a brush passed over it to press it against that face, in places where it might be kept off by air between, which would otherwise prevent its receiving the smoothness. But we will talk further of this, when I have the pleasure of seeing you.*

You speak of enlarging your foundery. Here are all the matrices of Rumford's and James's founderies to be sold. There seems to be among them some tolerable Hebrews and Greeks, and some good blacks. I suppose you know them. Shall I buy any of them for you? I thank you for your kind invitation. Perhaps I may embrace it for a few days. My best respects to good Mrs. Baskerville, and believe me ever, with great esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

Right of the British Parliament to make Laws binding the Colonies, denied. — Lord Mansfield's Opinion of the pretended Prussian Edict. — The Reading of it at Lord Le Despencer's by Paul Whitehead.

London, 6 October, 1773.

Dear Son,

I wrote to you on the 1st of last month, since which I have received yours of July 29th, from New York. I know not what letters of mine Governor Hutchinson could mean, as advising the people to insist on their

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* See a description of the mode of making Chinese paper, Vol. VI. p. 577.

independency. But, whatever they were, I suppose he has sent copies of them hither, having heard some whisperings about them.* I shall, however, be able at any time to justify every thing I have written; the purport being uniformly this, that they should carefully avoid all tumults and every violent measure, and content themselves with verbally keeping up their claims, and holding forth their rights whenever occasion requires; secure, that, from the growing importance of America, those claims will ere long be attended to and acknowledged.

From a long and thorough consideration of the subject, I am indeed of opinion, that the Parliament has no right to make any law whatever, binding on the colonies; that the King, and not the King, Lords, and Commons collectively, is their sovereign; and that the King, with their respective Parliaments, is their only legislator. I know your sentiments differ from mine on these subjects. You are a thorough government man, which I do not wonder at, nor do I aim at converting you. I only wish you to act uprightly and steadily, avoiding that duplicity, which, in Hutchinson, adds contempt to indignation. If you can promote the prosperity of your people, and leave them happier than you found them, whatever your political principles are, your memory will be honored.

I have written two pieces here lately for the *Public Advertiser*, on American affairs, designed to expose the conduct of this country towards the colonies in a short, comprehensive, and striking view, and stated, therefore, in out-of-the-way forms, as most likely to take the general attention. The first was called "*Rules by*

* Governor Hutchinson procured a copy of one of Dr. Franklin's letters, and sent it to the ministry. See Vol. IV. p. 450.

which a Great Empire may be reduced to a Small One;" the second, "*An Edict of the King of Prussia.*" I sent you one of the first, but could not get enough of the second to spare you one, though my clerk went the next morning to the printer's, and wherever they were sold. They were all gone but two. In my own mind I preferred the first, as a composition, for the quantity and variety of the matter contained, and a kind of spirited ending of each paragraph. But I find that others here generally prefer the second.

I am not suspected as the author, except by one or two friends; and have heard the latter spoken of in the highest terms, as the keenest and severest piece that has appeared here a long time. Lord Mansfield, I hear, said of it, that it *was very* ABLE *and very* ARTFUL *indeed;* and would do mischief by giving here a bad impression of the measures of government; and in the colonies, by encouraging them in their contumacy. It is reprinted in the *Chronicle*, where you will see it, but stripped of all the capitaling and italicking, that intimate the allusions and mark the emphasis of written discourses, to bring them as near as possible to those spoken. Printing such a piece all in one even small character, seems to me like repeating one of Whitefield's sermons in the monotony of a schoolboy.

What made it the more noticed here was, that people in reading it were, as the phrase is, *taken in*, till they had got half through it, and imagined it a real edict, to which mistake I suppose the King of Prussia's *character* must have contributed. I was down at Lord Le Despencer's, when the post brought that day's papers. Mr. Whitehead was there, too, (Paul Whitehead, the author of "Manners,") who runs early through all the papers, and tells the company what he finds

remarkable. He had them in another room, and we were chatting in the breakfast parlour, when he came running in to us, out of breath, with the paper in his hand. "Here!" says he, "here's news for ye! Here's the King of Prussia, claiming a right to this kingdom!" All stared, and I as much as anybody; and he went on to read it. When he had read two or three paragraphs, a gentleman present said, "Damn his impudence, I dare say we shall hear by next post, that he is upon his march with one hundred thousand men to back this." Whitehead, who is very shrewd, soon after began to smoke it, and looking in my face, said, "I 'll be hanged if this is not some of your American jokes upon us." The reading went on, and ended with abundance of laughing, and a general verdict that it was a fair hit; and the piece was cut out of the paper and preserved in my Lord's collection.

I do not wonder that Hutchinson should be dejected. It must be an uncomfortable thing to live among people, who, he is conscious, universally detest him. Yet I fancy he will not have leave to come home, both because they know not well what to do with him, and because they do not very well like his conduct. I am ever your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Proposed Accommodation with Great Britain. — Petition for removing the Governors.

London, 1 November, 1773.

Sir,

I duly received your favor of the 26th of August, with the letter enclosed for Lord Dartmouth, which I im-

mediately sent to him. As soon as he comes to town, I shall wait upon his Lordship, and discourse with him upon the subject of it; and I shall immediately write to you what I can collect from the conversation.

In my own opinion, the letter of the two Houses of the 29th of June, proposing, as a satisfactory measure, the restoring things to the state in which they were at the conclusion of the late war, is a fair and generous offer on our part, and my discourse here is, that it is more than Britain has a right to expect from us; and that, if she has any wisdom left, she will embrace it, and agree with us immediately; for that the longer she delays the accommodation, which finally she must for her own sake obtain, the worse terms she may expect, since the inequality of power and importance, that at present subsists between us, is daily diminishing, and our sense of our own rights, and of her injustice, continually increasing. I am the more encouraged to hold such language, by perceiving that the general sense of the nation is for us; a conviction prevailing, that we have been ill used, and that a breach with us would be ruinous to this country.

The pieces I wrote, to increase and strengthen those sentiments, were more read and talked of and attended to than usual. The first, as you will see by the enclosed, has been called for and reprinted in the same paper, besides being copied in others, and in the magazines. A long, labored answer has been made to it, (by Governor Bernard, it is said,) which I send you. I am told it does not satisfy those in whose justification it was written, and that a better is preparing. I think with you, that great difficulties must attend an attempt to make a new representation of our grievances, in which the point of right should be kept out of sight, especially as the concurrence of so many colo-

nies seems now necessary. And therefore it would certainly be best and wisest for Parliament, (which does not meet till after the middle of January,) to make up the matter themselves, and at once reduce things to the state desired. There are not wanting some here, who believe this will really be the case; for that, a new election being now in view, the present members are likely to consider the composing all differences with America, as a measure agreeable to the trading and manufacturing part of the nation; and that the neglecting it may be made use of by their opponents to their disadvantage.

I have as yet received no answer to the petition for removing the governors.* I imagine that it will hardly be complied with, as it would embarrass government to provide for them otherwise, and it will be thought hard to neglect men, who have exposed themselves, by adhering to what is here called the interest and rights of this country. But this I only conjecture, as I have heard nothing certain about it. Indeed I should think continuing them in their places would be rather a punishment than a favor. For what comfort can men have in living among a people, with whom they are the object of universal odium?

I shall continue here one winter longer, and use my best endeavours, as long as I stay, for the service of our country. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* Petition from the Legislature of Massachusetts for the removal of Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant-Governor Oliver. See Vol. IV. p. 430.

TO AN ENGRAVER.*

Art of printing on China Ware. — Use of the Art in teaching Moral Lessons.

London, 3 November, 1773.

SIR,

I was much pleased with the specimens you so kindly sent me of your new art of engraving. That on the china is admirable. No one would suppose it any thing but painting. I hope you meet with all the encouragement you merit, and that the invention will be, what inventions seldom are, profitable to the inventor.

Now we are speaking of inventions, I know not who pretends to that of copper-plate engravings for earthen ware, and I am not disposed to contest the honor with anybody, as the improvement in taking impressions not directly from the plate, but from printed paper, applicable by that means to other than flat forms, is far beyond my first idea. But I have reason to apprehend, that I might have given the hint, on which that improvement was made; for, more than twenty years since, I wrote to Dr. Mitchell from America, proposing to him the printing of square tiles, for ornamenting chimneys, from copper plates, describing the manner in which I thought it might be done, and advising the borrowing from the booksellers the plates, that had been used in a thin folio, called *Moral Virtue Delineated*, for the purpose.

The Dutch Delft ware tiles were much used in America, which are only or chiefly Scripture histories,

* The name of the engraver is not contained in the manuscript from which the letter has been transcribed.

wretchedly scrawled. I wished to have those moral prints, which were originally taken from Horace's poetical figures, introduced on tiles, which, being about our chimneys and constantly in the eyes of children when by the fireside, might give parents an opportunity, in explaining them, to impress moral sentiments; and I gave expectations of great demand for them, if executed. Dr. Mitchell wrote to me, in answer, that he had communicated my scheme to several of the principal artists in the earthen way about London, who rejected it as impracticable; and it was not till some years after, that I first saw an enamelled snuff box, which I was sure was from a copper-plate, though the curvature of the form made me wonder how the impression was taken.

I understand the china work in Philadelphia is declined by the first owners. Whether any others will take it up and continue it, I know not.

Mr. Banks is at present engaged in preparing to publish the botanical discoveries of his voyage. He employs ten engravers for the plates, in which he is very curious, so as not to be quite satisfied in some cases with the expression given by either the graver, etching, or mezzotinto, particularly where there is a woolliness, or a multitude of small points, on a leaf. I sent him the largest of the specimens you sent, containing a number of sprigs. I have not seen him since, to know whether your manner would not suit some of his plants better than the more common methods. With great esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY.

Supposed Disposition to compose the Differences with America. — Tea Duty.

London, 3 November, 1773.

SIR,

There is at present great quietness here, and no prospect that the war between the Turks and Russians will spread farther in Europe. The last harvest is allowed to have been generally plentiful in this country; and yet, such was the preceding scantiness of crops, that it is thought there is no corn to spare for exportation, which continues the advantages to our corn provinces.

The Parliament is not to meet till after the middle of January. It is said, there is a disposition to compose all differences with America before the next general election, as the trading and manufacturing part of the nation are generally our wellwishers, think we have been hardly used, and apprehend ill consequences from a continuance of the measures that we complain of; and that, if those measures are not changed, an American interest may be spirited up at the election against the present members who are in, or friends to administration. Our steady refusal to take tea from hence for several years past has made its impressions. The scheme for supplying us without repealing the act, by a temporary license from the treasury to export tea to America, free of duty, you are before this time acquainted with. I much want to hear how that tea is received. If it is rejected, the act will undoubtedly be repealed, otherwise I suppose it will be continued; and when we have got into the use of the Company's tea, and the foreign correspondences that

supply us at present are broken off, the licenses will be discontinued, and the act enforced.

I apprehend the better understanding, that lately subsisted in our provincial administration, will hardly be continued with the new governor; but you will soon see. I wish for the full letter you promise me by the next packet, which is now daily expected. With unalterable esteem and attachment, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

London, 3 November, 1773.

Dear Son,

I wrote you pretty fully by the last packet, and having had no line from you of later date than the beginning of August, and little stirring here lately, I have now little to write.

In that letter I mentioned my having written two papers, of which I preferred the first, but the public the last. It seems I was mistaken in judging of the public opinion; for the first was reprinted some weeks after in the same paper, the printer giving for reason, that he did it in compliance with the earnest request of many private persons, and some respectable societies; which is the more extraordinary, as it had been copied in several other papers, and in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Such papers may seem to have a tendency to increase our divisions; but I intend a contrary effect, and hope, by comprising in little room, and setting in a strong light, the grievances of the colonies, more attention will be paid to them by our administration, and that, when their unreasonableness is generally seen, some of them will be removed, to the restoration of harmony between us.

B. Franklin.

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Method of warming Churches. — Hutchinson's Letters. — Samuel Adams. — Major Hawley.

Boston, 10 November, 1773.

Dear Sir,

I received your valuable favors of the 7th and 25th of July, and you will please to accept the thanks of the committee of our congregation, as well as my own, for the trouble you have very kindly given yourself in your clear and particular account of the warming machines for large rooms, and your advice respecting our new building, together with the truly philosophical and convincing reasons upon which it is founded. All, to to whom I have read that part of your letter, have been highly entertained with it; and I must particularly thank you for your observation, that we do not receive the disorder called a *cold* from cold air, and therefore *never at meeting*, being proud of supporting myself with your authority against some of our physicians, who seem to think that all the disorders of their patients are caught there. Your letter has satisfied my whole congregation, and we are now all determined to worship and make ourselves as comfortable as may be *more majorum*.*

After all the solicitous inquiries of the governor and his friends respecting his letters, it still remains a secret from whom and to whom they came. This is known here to two persons only besides myself, and will, I believe, remain undiscovered, unless farther intelligence should come from your side of the water, than I have reason to think has yet been obtained;

* See the account of the method of warming public buildings, here alluded to, in Vol. VI. p. 397.

though I cannot but admire your honest openness in this affair, and negligence of any inconveniences, that might arise to yourself in this essential service to our injured country.

I have the pleasure to find, that a confidence in your abilities and principles is very far from being diminished in our House of Commons, and to assure you, that one of the members for this town, Mr. Samuel Adams, a correspondent of Dr. Lee's, who had the chief hand in a letter from the House to you, which I perceive by your reply gave you uneasiness, has lately expressed the warmest esteem of you as an important and thorough friend to the rights of America.* This gentleman I regard for his uncommon zeal and activity in support of these rights; but I have repeatedly found occasion in a friendly manner to blame his excessive jealousy, in a cause peculiarly dear to him, which has sometimes led him to treat not in the kindest manner some of its faithful advocates, and particularly Governor Pownall. The Speaker, and many others in the House, are your steady friends, particularly Major Hawley, from Northampton; a gentleman of the law, who speaks with uncommon clearness and force, and is behind no man there in point of influence. I mention these things from no other motive than an apprehension, that, at your distance from us, it might be some satisfaction and direction to you to know them.

There has been an attempt by Mr. Sewall, (as is generally believed,) judge of the admiralty for Nova Scotia, and our attorney-general, to vindicate the governor's letters, in one of our newspapers. The sophis-

* For the source of Mr. Adams's impressions, in regard to Dr. Franklin, see the extracts from Arthur Lee's letter to him above, p. 57; and also a reference to an anonymous letter, Vol. VII. p. 548.

try made but a feeble impression, and, except among a few, rather provoked than pacified. I am, &c.

SAMUEL COOPER.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Petition for the Removal of the Governors presented by Lord Dartmouth. — Duel between Mr. Temple and Mr. Whately.

London, 5 January, 1774.

SIR,

I received the honor of yours dated October 28th, with the journals of the House and Mr. Turner's Election Sermon. I waited on Lord Dartmouth, on his return to town, and learned that he had presented to his Majesty our petition for the removal of the governors. No subsequent step had yet been taken upon it; but his Lordship said, the King would probably refer the consideration of it to a committee of Council, and that I should have notice to be heard in support of it. By the turn of his conversation, though he was not explicit, I apprehend the petition is not likely to be complied with; but we shall see. His Lordship expressed, as usual, much concern at the differences subsisting, and wished they would be accommodated. Perhaps his good wishes are all that is in his power.

The famous letters having unfortunately engaged Mr. Temple and Mr. Whately in a duel, which being interrupted, would probably be renewed, I thought it incumbent on me to prevent, as far as I could, any farther mischief, by declaring publicly the part I had in the affair of those letters, and thereby at the same time to rescue Mr. Temple's character from an undeserved and groundless imputation, that bore hard upon

his honor, viz. that of taking the letters from Mr. Whately, and in breach of confidence. I did this with the more pleasure, as I believe him a sincere friend to our country. I am told by some, that it was imprudent in me to avow the obtaining and sending those letters, for that administration will resent it. I have not much apprehension of this; but, if it happens, I must take the consequences. I only hope it will not affect any friend on your side of the water, for I have never mentioned *to whom* they were transmitted.

A letter of mine to you, printed in one of the Boston papers, has lately been reprinted here, to show, as the publisher expresses it, that I am "*one of the most determined enemies* of the welfare and prosperity of Great Britain." In the opinion of some, every one who wishes the good of the *whole empire* may nevertheless be an enemy to *the welfare of Great Britain*, if he does not wish its good *exclusively* of every other *part*, and to see its welfare built on their servitude and wretchedness. Such an enemy I certainly am. But methinks it is wrong to print letters of mine at Boston, which give occasion to these reflections.

I shall continue to do all I possibly can this winter towards an accommodation of our differences; but my hopes are small. Divine Providence first infatuates the power it designs to ruin. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Insinuations respecting Mr. Galloway. — Dr. Franklin proposes to return to America.

London, 5 January, 1774.

DEAR SON,

I received yours of October 29th, and November 2d. Your December packet is not yet arrived.

No insinuations of the kind you mention, concerning Mr. Galloway, have reached me, and, if they had, it would have been without the least effect; as I have always had the strongest reliance on the steadiness of his friendship, and on the best grounds, the knowledge I have of his integrity, and the often repeated disinterested services he has rendered me. My return will interfere with nobody's interest or influence in public affairs, as my intention is to decline all interest in them, and every active part, except where it can serve a friend, and to content myself with communicating the knowledge of them which my situation may have furnished me with, and be content with giving my advice for the public benefit, where it may be asked, or where I shall think it may be attended to; for, being now about entering my sixty-ninth year, and having lived so great a part of my life to the public, it seems but fair that I should be allowed to live the small remainder to myself and to my friends.

If the honorable office you mention will be agreeable to him, I heartily wish it him. I only hope, that, if offered to him, he will insist on its being not during pleasure, but *quamdiu se bene gesserit.*

Our friend Temple, as you will see by the papers, has been engaged in a duel, about an affair in which

he had no concern. As the combat was interrupted, and understood to be unfinished, I thought it incumbent on me to do what I could for preventing further mischief, and so declared my having transmitted the letters in question. This has drawn some censure upon myself; but, as I grow old, I grow less concerned about censure, when I am satisfied that I act rightly; and I have the pleasure of having exculpated a friend, who lay undeservedly under an imputation much to his dishonor.

I am now seriously preparing for my departure to America. I purpose sending my luggage, books, instruments, &c., by All or Falconer, and taking my passage to New York in one of the spring or summer packets, partly for settling some business with the postoffice there, and partly that I may see you on my way to Philadelphia, and learn thereby more perfectly the state of affairs there. Your affectionate father,

B. Franklin

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

A particular Account of the Proceedings of the Privy Council on the Petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts for the Removal of Governor Hutchinson. — Dr. Franklin dismissed from his Office of Deputy Postmaster-General in America.

London, 15 February, 1774.

Sir,

I wrote a line to you by the last packet, just to acquaint you there had been a hearing on our petition. I shall now give you the history of it as succinctly as I can.

We had long imagined, that the King would have

considered that petition, as he had done the preceding one, in his cabinet, and have given an answer without a hearing, since it did not pray punishments or disabilities on the governors. But on Saturday the 8th of January, in the afternoon, I received notice from the clerk of the Council, that the Lords of the Committee for Plantation Affairs, would, on the Tuesday following at twelve, meet at the Cockpit, to take into consideration the petition referred to them by his Majesty, and that my attendance was required.

I sent directly to Mr. Arthur Lee, requesting a meeting, that we might consult upon it. He was not at his chambers, but my note was left for him. Sunday morning I went to Mr. Bollan, and communicated the affair to him. He had received a similar notice. We considered whether it was best to employ other counsel, since Mr. Lee, he said, could not be admitted as such, not being yet called to the bar. He thought it not advisable. He had sometimes done it in colony cases, and found lawyers of little service. Those who are eminent, and hope to rise in their profession, are unwilling to offend the court; and its disposition on this occasion was well known. But he would move to be heard in behalf of the Council of the province, and thence take occasion to support the petition himself.

I went and sent again to Mr. Lee's chambers in the Temple, but could not meet with him; and it was not till near the end of the week that I learnt he was at Bath. On Monday, very late in the afternoon, I received another notice, that Mr. Mauduit, agent for the governor and lieutenant-governor, had asked and obtained leave to be heard by counsel on the morrow in their behalf. This very short notice seemed intended to surprise us. On Tuesday, we attended at the

Cockpit, and, the petition being read, I was called upon for what I had to offer in support of it; when, as had been concerted between us, I acquainted their Lordships that Mr. Bollan, then present, in pursuance of their notice, would speak to it.

He came forward and began to speak; but objection was immediately made by some of the Lords, that he, being only agent for the Council, which was not a party to this petition, could not properly be heard on it. He however repeatedly endeavoured to obtain leave to speak, but without effect; they would scarce hear out a sentence, and finally set him aside. I then said, that, with the petition of the House of Representatives, I had received their resolutions which preceded it, and a copy of the letters on which those resolutions were founded, which I would lay before their Lordships in support of the petition.

The resolutions were accordingly read; but, when the letters were taken up, Mr. Wedderburn, the solicitor-general, brought there as counsel for the governors, began to object, and inquire how they were authenticated, as did also some of the Lords. I said the authentications were annexed. They wanted to know the nature of them. I said that would appear, when they were read, and prayed they would hear them. Lord Chief Justice De Grey asked whom the letters were directed to; and, taking them in his hand, observed there was no address prefixed to any of them. I said, that, though it did not appear to whom they were directed, it appeared who had written them; their names were subscribed; the originals had been shown to the gentlemen themselves, and they had not denied their handwriting; and the testifications annexed proved these to be true copies.

With difficulty I obtained leave to have the authen-

tications read; and the solicitor-general proceeding to make observations as counsel for the governors, I said to their Lordships, that it was some surprise to me to find counsel employed against the petition; that I had no notice of that intention, till late in the preceding day; that I had not purposed troubling their Lordships with the hearing of counsel, because I did not conceive that any thing could possibly arise out of the petition, any point of law or of right, that might require the discussion of lawyers; that I apprehended this matter before their Lordships was rather a question of civil or political prudence, whether, on the state of the fact that the governors had lost all trust and confidence with the people, and become universally obnoxious, it would be for the interest of his Majesty's service to continue them in those stations in that province; that I conceived this to be a question of which their Lordships were already perfect judges, and could receive no assistance in it from the arguments of counsel; but, if counsel was to be heard on the other side, I must then request leave to bring counsel in behalf of the Assembly, and that their Lordships would be pleased to appoint a further day for the hearing, to give time for preparing the counsel.

Mr. Mauduit was then asked, if he would wave the leave he had of being heard by counsel, that their Lordships might proceed immediately to consider the petition. He said he was requested by the governors to defend them, and they had promised to defray the expense, by which he understood that they expected he should employ counsel; and then, making me some compliments, as if of superior abilities, said he should not against me hazard the defence of his friends by taking it upon himself. I said I had intended merely to lay the papers before their Lordships, without mak-

ing a single comment on them. But this did not satisfy; he chose to be heard by counsel. So finally I had leave to be heard by counsel also in behalf of the petition. The solicitor-general, finding his cavils against the admission of the letters were not supportable, at last said, that, to save their Lordships' time, he would admit the copies to be true transcripts of the originals, but he should reserve to himself a right, when the matter came on again, of asking certain questions, such as, How the Assembly came into possession of them, through what hands, and by what means they were procured? "Certainly," replied Lord Chief Justice De Grey, somewhat austerely, "and to whom they were directed; for the perfect understanding of the passages may depend on that and other such circumstances. We can receive no charge against a man founded on letters directed to nobody, and perhaps received by nobody. The laws of this country have no such practice." Lord President, near whom I stood, as I was putting up my papers, asked me if I intended to answer such questions. In that, I said, I shall take counsel. The day appointed for the hearing was the 29th of January.

Several friends now came to me, and advised me to retain Mr. Dunning, formerly solicitor-general, and very able in his profession. I wished first to consult with Mr. Lee, supposing he might rather be for his friend, Mr. Sergeant Glynn. I found Mr. Lee was expected in town about the latter end of the week, and thought to wait his coming; in the mean time I was urged to take Mr. Dunning's advice, as to my own conduct, if such questions should be asked me. I did so; and he was clear, that I was not and could not be obliged to answer them, if I did not choose it, which I informed him was the case, being under a promise not

to divulge from whom I received the letters. He said he would attend, however, if I desired it, and object in my behalf to their putting such questions.

A report now prevailed through the town, that I had been grossly abused by the solicitor-general, at the Council Board. But this was premature. He had only intended it, and mentioned that intention. I heard, too, from all quarters, that the ministry and all the courtiers were highly enraged against me for transmitting those letters. I was called an incendiary, and the papers were filled with invectives against me. Hints were given me, that there were some thoughts of apprehending me, seizing my papers, and sending me to Newgate. I was well informed, that a resolution was taken to deprive me of my place; it was only thought best to defer it till after the hearing; I suppose, because I was there to be so blackened, that nobody should think it injustice. Many knew, too, how the petition was to be treated; and I was told, even before the first hearing, that it was to be rejected with some epithets, the Assembly to be censured, and some honor done the governors. How this could be known, one cannot say. It might be only conjecture.

The transactions relating to the tea had increased and strengthened the torrent of clamor against us. No one had the least expectation of success to the petition; and, though I had asked leave to use counsel, I was half inclined to wave it, and save you the expense; but Mr. Bollan was now strongly for it, as they had refused to hear him. And, though fortified by his opinion, as he had long experience in your affairs, I would at first have ventured to deviate from the instructions you sent me in that particular, supposing you to allow some discretionary liberty to your agents; yet, now that he urged it as necessary, I employed a

solicitor, and furnished him with what materials I could for framing a brief; and Mr. Lee, coming to town, entered heartily into the business, and undertook to engage Sergeant Glynn, who would readily have served us, but, being in a fit of the gout, which made his attendance uncertain, the solicitor retained Mr. Dunning and Mr. John Lee, another able man of the profession.

While my mind was taken up with this business, I was harassed with a subpœna from the Chancellor to attend his court the next day, at the suit of Mr. William Whately concerning the letters. This man was under personal obligations to me, such as would have made it base in him to commence such a suit of his own motion against me, without any previous notice, claim, or demand; but, if he was capable of doing it at the instance of the ministry, whose banker he is for some pension money, he must be still baser.

The briefs being prepared and perused by our counsel, we had a consultation at Mr. Dunning's chambers in Lincoln's Inn. I introduced Mr. Arthur Lee, as my friend and successor in the agency. The brief, as you will see by a copy I send you, pointed out the passages of the letters, which were applicable in support of the particular charges contained in the resolutions and petition. But the counsel observed, we wanted evidence to prove those passages false; the counsel on the other side would say, they were true representations of the state of the country; and, as to the political reflections of the writers, and their sentiments of government, their aims to extend and enforce the power of Parliament and diminish the privileges of their countrymen, though these might appear in the letters and need no other proof, yet they would never be considered here as offences, but as virtues and merits. The counsel therefore thought it would an-

swer no good end to insist on those particulars; and that it was more advisable to state as facts the general discontent of the people, that the governors had lost all credit with them, and were become odious, &c.; facts of which the petition was itself full proof, because otherwise it could not have existed; and then show, that it must in such a situation be necessary for his Majesty's service, as well as the peace of the province, to remove them. By this opinion, great part of the brief became unnecessary.

Notwithstanding the intimations I had received, I could not believe that the solicitor-general would be permitted to wander from the question before their Lordships into a new case, the accusation of another person for another matter, not cognizable before them, who could not expect to be there so accused, and therefore could not be prepared for his defence. And yet all this happened, and in all probability was preconcerted; for all the courtiers were invited, as to an entertainment, and there never was such an appearance of privy counsellors on any occasion, not less than thirty-five, besides an immense crowd of other auditors.

The hearing began by reading my letter to Lord Dartmouth, enclosing the petition, then the petition itself, the resolves, and lastly the letters, the solicitor-general making no objections, nor asking any of the questions he had talked of at the preceding board. Our counsel then opened the matter, upon their general plan, and acquitted themselves very handsomely; only Mr. Dunning, having a disorder on his lungs that weakened his voice exceedingly, was not so perfectly heard as one could have wished. The solicitor-general then went into what he called a history of the province for the last ten years, and bestowed plenty of

abuse upon it, mingled with encomium on the governors. But the favorite part of his discourse was levelled at your agent, who stood there the butt of his invective ribaldry for near an hour, not a single Lord adverting to the impropriety and indecency of treating a public messenger in so ignominious a manner, who was present only as the person delivering your petition, with the consideration of which no part of *his* conduct had any concern. If he had done a wrong, in obtaining and transmitting the letters, that was not the tribunal where he was to be accused and tried. The cause was already before the Chancellor. Not one of their Lordships checked and recalled the orator to the business before them, but, on the contrary, a very few excepted, they seemed to enjoy highly the entertainment, and frequently burst out in loud applauses. This part of his speech was thought so good, that they have since printed it, in order to defame me everywhere, and particularly to destroy my reputation on your side of the water; but the grosser parts of the abuse are omitted, appearing, I suppose, in their own eyes, too foul to be seen on paper; so that the speech, compared to what it was, is now perfectly decent. I send you one of the copies. My friends advise me to write an answer, which I purpose immediately.

The reply of Mr. Dunning concluded. Being very ill, and much incommoded by standing so long, his voice was so feeble, as to be scarce audible. What little I heard was very well said, but appeared to have little effect.

Their Lordships' Report, which I send you, is dated the same day. It contains a severe censure, as you will see, on the petition and the petitioners; and, as I think, a very unfair conclusion from my silence, that

the charge of surreptitiously obtaining the letters was a true one; though the solicitor, as appears in the printed speech, had acquainted them that that matter was before the Chancellor; and my counsel had stated the impropriety of my answering there to charges then trying in another court. In truth I came by them honorably, and my intention in sending them was virtuous, if an endeavour to lessen the breach between two states of the same empire be such, by showing that the injuries complained of by one of them did not proceed from the other, but from traitors among themselves.*

It may be supposed, that I am very angry on this occasion, and therefore I did purpose to add no reflections of mine on the treatment the Assembly and their agent have received, lest they should be thought the effects of resentment and a desire of exasperating. But, indeed, what I feel on my own account is half lost in what I feel for the public. When I see, that all petitions and complaints of grievances are so odious to government, that even the mere pipe which conveys them becomes obnoxious, I am at a loss to know how peace and union are to be maintained or restored between the different parts of the empire. Grievances cannot be redressed unless they are known; and they cannot be known but through complaints and petitions. If these are deemed affronts, and the messengers punished as offenders, who will henceforth send petitions? And who will deliver them? It has been thought a dangerous thing in any state to stop up the vent of griefs. Wise governments have therefore generally received petitions with some indulgence, even when but slightly founded. Those, who think

* For other particulars relating to this affair, see Vol. IV. pp. 447 – 455.

themselves injured by their rulers, are sometimes, by a mild and prudent answer, convinced of their error. But where complaining is a crime, hope becomes despair.

The day following I received a written notice from the secretary of the general postoffice, that his Majesty's postmaster-general *found it necessary* to dismiss me from my office of deputy postmaster-general in North America. The expression was well chosen, for in truth they were *under a necessity* of doing it; it was not their own inclination; they had no fault to find with my conduct in the office; they knew my merit in it, and that, if it was now an office of value, it had become such chiefly through my care and good management; that it was worth nothing, when given to me; it would not then pay the salary allowed me, and, unless it did, I was not to expect it; and that it now produces near three thousand pounds a year clear to the treasury here. They had beside a personal regard for me. But, as the postoffices in all the principal towns are growing daily more and more valuable, by the increase of correspondence, the officers being paid *commissions* instead of *salaries*, the ministers seem to intend, by directing me to be displaced on this occasion, to hold out to them all an example, that, if they are not corrupted by their office to promote the measures of administration, though against the interests and rights of the colonies, they must not expect to be continued. This is the first act for extending the influence of government in this branch. But, as orders have been some time since given to the American postmaster-general, who used to have the disposition of all places under him, not to fill vacancies of value, till notice of such vacancies had been sent hither, and instructions thereupon received from

hence, it is plain, that such influence is to be a part of the system; and probable, that those vacancies will for the future be filled by officers from this country. How safe the correspondence of your Assembly committees along the continent will be through the hands of such officers may now be worth consideration, especially as the postoffice act of Parliament allows a postmaster to open letters, if warranted so to do by the order of a secretary of state, and every provincial secretary may be deemed a secretary of state in his own province.

It is not yet known what steps will be taken by government with regard to the colonies, or to our province in particular. But, as inquiries are making of all who come from thence, concerning the late riot, and the meetings that preceded it, and who were speakers and movers at these meetings, I suspect there is some intention of seizing persons, and perhaps of sending them hither. But of this I have no certainty. No motion has yet been made in the House of Commons concerning our affairs; and that made in the House of Lords was withdrawn for the present. It is not likely, however, that the session will pass over without some proceeding relating to us, though perhaps it is not yet settled what the measures shall be. With my best wishes for the prosperity of the province, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY.

Acts of the Pennsylvania Assembly. — Duty on Tea. — Hutchinson's Letters.

London, 18 February, 1774.

Dear Friend,

The acts of the February session, 1773, are at last presented, of which I have lately acquainted the Committee.* They are now before the Board of Trade. I do not yet hear of any objection to the paper money bill, and hope there can be none that we shall not get over. I observe there is no declaration of the value of the bills, whether proclamation or sterling.† Possibly, if this should be taken notice of, it may be thought too loose and uncertain, but it may escape their observation; and, if necessary, you can by a little supplement ascertain it.

The treatment of the tea in America has excited

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* The acts of the Pennsylvania Assembly, sent over to be approved by the King.

† In Queen Anne's time the currency of the colonies had become so much deranged, by the different denominations given to foreign coins in the different colonies, that she issued a proclamation, dated June 18th, 1704, with the design of introducing uniformity. The proclamation begins as follows. "We, having had under our consideration the different rates at which the same species of foreign coins do pass in our several colonies and plantations in America, and the inconveniences thereof, by the indirect practice of drawing the money from one plantation to another, to the great prejudice of the trade of our subjects, and being sensible that the same cannot be otherwise remedied, than by reducing all foreign coins to the same current rate within all our dominions in America," &c. The value of the foreign coins in circulation, as proved at the mint, is next stated. The *Seville* piece of eight, or dollar, is fixed at four shillings and sixpence sterling. The *Mexico* piece of eight the same; and the *Pillar* piece of eight, at four shillings, six pence, and three farthings. The proclamation then proceeds; "We have therefore thought fit, for remedying the said inconveniences, by the advice of our Council, to publish and declare, that, from and after the first day of January next ensuing the date hereof, no Seville, Pillar, or Mexico

great wrath here; but how that will vent itself is not yet known, except that some part of it has fallen upon me, perhaps from a suspicion that I instigated the opposition to its importation. This, however, is not the given reason. My returning Hutchinson's and Oliver's letters to Boston is held out to the public, as the great offence for which I am deprived of my office. I will explain to you my conduct in that matter.

Those letters, which had, at the time, been shown about here to several persons, fell into the hands of a gentleman, who produced them to me, to convince me of the truth of a fact, the possibility of which I had in conversation denied, namely, that the sending troops to Boston, and other measures so offensive to the people of New England, did not arise from any inimical disposition in this country towards them, but were projected, proposed, and solicited, by some of the principal and best esteemed of their own people. I was convinced, accordingly, by perusing those letters, and

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pieces of eight, though of the full weight of seventeen pennyweights and a half, shall be accounted, received, taken, or paid, within any of our said colonies or plantations, as well those under Proprietors and Charters, as under our immediate commission and government, at above the rate of six shillings per piece, current money, for the discharge of any contracts or bargains, to be made after the said first day of January next."

This proclamation not proving effectual to the extent desired, an act of Parliament was passed three years afterwards, inflicting a penalty of ten pounds, and six months' imprisonment, upon offenders after the first day of May, 1709, but not compelling any person to take the coins at the prescribed rates.

Hence the currency, in which a dollar was estimated at six shillings, was called *Proclamation Money*, and sometimes *Lawful Money*. Both these names continued in use till the Revolution, and the latter till the United States currency became established. But the proclamation did not wholly effect its object; for in several of the colonies the dollar continued to be reckoned at more than six shillings, owing to the fluctuation in the value of the paper currency and exchange. See, on this subject, Vol. II. p. 351; and SPARKS's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. I. pp. 273–280.

thought it might have a good effect, if I could convince the leaders there of the same truth, since it would remove much of their resentment against Britain as a harsh, unkind —— *

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Treatment of Dr. Franklin in Consequence of sending Hutchinson's Letters. — French Edition of his Writings.

London, 25 February, 1774.

Dear Sir,

I have written a pretty full account to the Speaker of the treatment their petition and their agent have received here. My letter went to Symes, and probably you may have seen it before this can reach you; therefore, and because I have a little disorder in my eyes at present, I do not repeat any part of it to you, nor can I well send a copy to him.

You can have no conception of the rage the ministerial people have been in with me, on account of my transmitting those letters.† It is quite incomprehensible. If they had been wise, they might have made a good use of the discovery, by agreeing to lay the blame of our differences on those, from whom, by those letters, it appeared to have arisen, and by a change of measures, which would then have appeared natural, and restored the harmony between the two countries.

I send directed to you a set of the late French edition of my Philosophical Papers.‡ There are in it

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* The remainder of the letter is lost.

† Hutchinson's Letters.

‡ Dubourg's edition, in two quarto volumes, published in 1773. To his wife he wrote, September 1st, 1773; "There is a new translation

several pieces not in the English. When you have looked them over, please to give them to Mr. Winthrop for the College Library. I am ever, dear Sir, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Petitions to Parliament from Americans in London. — Alarm of the Manufacturers. — New Measures hostile to the Colonies expected.

London, 2 April, 1774.

SIR,

My last was of the 22d past, since which I have received none of your favors. I mentioned that the bill brought into Parliament for punishing Boston met with no opposition. It did, however, meet with a little before it got through, some few of the members speaking against it in the House of Commons, and more in the House of Lords. It passed, however, by a very great majority in both, and received the royal assent

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of my book at Paris, and printed there, being the third edition in French. A fifth edition is now printing here. To the French edition they have prefixed a print of your old husband, which, though a copy of that by Chamberlin, has got so French a countenance, that you would take him for one of that lively nation."

The portrait by Chamberlin, which is here mentioned, is one of the best that was ever taken of Dr. Franklin. It was painted during his first mission to England, and beautifully engraved in *mezzotinto* by Fisher. He is represented in a sitting posture, nearly full length, and engaged in experiments with his electrical bells, which hang in the room in which he is sitting. Through an open window the lightning is seen, in the distance, descending upon an edifice and rending it asunder. In size the engraved print is thirteen inches by ten. It is much reduced in the copies, which have been made from it, and in some of them the upper part of the figure only is retained, by which the spirit and general effect of the whole are lost.

on Thursday the 31st past. You will have a copy of it from Mr. Lee.

In mine of February 2d, I informed you, that, after the treatment I had received at the Council Board, it was not possible for me to act longer as your agent, apprehending I could as such be of no further use to the province. I have nevertheless given what assistance I could, as a private man, by speaking to members of both Houses, and by joining in the petitions of the natives of America now happening to be in London, which were ably drawn by Mr. Lee, to be presented separately to the several branches of the legislature. They serve, though without other effect, to show our sentiments, and that we did not look on and let the act pass without bearing our testimony against it. And, indeed, though called *petitions* (for under another name they would not have been received) they are rather *remonstrances* and *protests*.

By the enclosed extract of a letter from Wakefield in Yorkshire to a friend of mine, you will see that the manufacturers begin to take the alarm. Another general non-importation agreement is apprehended by them, which would complete their ruin. But great pains are taken to quiet them with the idea, that Boston must immediately submit, and acknowledge the claims of Parliament, for that none of the other colonies will adhere to them. A number of the principal manufacturers from different parts of the kingdom are now in town, to oppose the new duty on foreign linens, which they fear may provoke the Germans to lay discouragements on British manufactures. They have desired me to meet and dine with them on Wednesday next, where I shall have an opportunity of learning their sentiments more fully, and communicating my own.

Some alterations of the constitution of the Massachusetts are now hotly talked of; though what they are to be, seems hardly yet settled. One thing mentioned is the appointment of the Council by *mandamus*. Another, giving power to the governor to appoint magistrates without consent of Council. Another, the abolishing of town meetings, or making it unlawful to hold them, till the business to be proposed has been certified to the governor, and his permission obtained. A motion has also been made in the House of Commons, with a view to conciliate, as is said; that all the duty acts should be revised, and, in the revision and reënacting, without formally or expressly repealing the tea duty (which would hurt the *dignity* of Parliament), sink or omit it, and add an equal value in some of the coasting port duties; and the tea duty, being thus taken out of the way, it is supposed will have the salutary effect of preventing the other colonies from making a common cause with ours. Some advantages in trade are at the same time to be given to America for the same purpose, such as carrying wine and fruit directly from Spain and Portugal, without touching in England.

I send enclosed the proceedings of the Lords on Wednesday, which show their zeal in the business, by appointing a committee to sit during the recess in the Easter holidays. With great esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN.

Proposes to return Home. — Illness and Death of Mr. Hewson.

London, 28 April, 1774.

My dear Love,

I hoped to have been on the sea in my return by this time; but find I must stay a few weeks longer, perhaps for the summer ships. Thanks to God, I continue well and hearty; and I hope to find you so, when I have the happiness once more of seeing you.

Your goddaughter, Amelia Evans that was, (now Mrs. Barry,) is gone again with her husband and children to Tunis, where she is to live some time, while her husband, who is captain of a ship, trades in those seas. Enclosed I send the affectionate, sensible, letter she wrote to me on taking leave.

My blessing to the children. Mrs. Hewson's have lately had the smallpox; the eldest in the common way very full, the youngest by inoculation lightly, and both are now well. But Mr. Hewson is down with a terrible fever, and till yesterday his life was despaired of. We now begin to hope his recovery. I shall give you another line by the packet of next week, and am, as ever, dear Debby, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.*

* In another letter, dated May 5th, he said; "Our family here is in great distress. Poor Mrs. Hewson has lost her husband, and Mrs. Stevenson her son-in-law. He died last Sunday morning of a fever, which baffled the skill of our best physicians. He was an excellent young man, ingenious, industrious, useful, and beloved by all that knew him. He was just established in a profitable, growing business, with the best prospects of bringing up his young family advantageously. They were a happy couple. All their schemes of life are now overthrown."

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Massachusetts Affairs. — Lord Chatham. — Postoffice.

London, 1 June, 1774.

SIR,

I received your respected favor of March 31st, with another of the same date from the Committee. The latest of my letters, which had then come to your hands, was of January 7th, since which I have written several, containing a full account of the hearing on the petition, the intended acts against our province, the petition presented by the natives of America at this time residing here, and the appointment of General Gage as governor. And in the course of last month I sent you, by various conveyances, under covers, with only a line or two, copies of the acts themselves, and other public papers and pamphlets. With this I enclose a list of your new Council, the Quebec bill, an abstract of the resolutions for laying duties on that province, and some papers containing the two protests of the Lords, and a list of those who have voted against the bills.

Lord Chatham, being ill at the time, could not be present, or he would probably have voted on the same side. He has since appeared in the House, and delivered his sentiments fully on the American measures, blamed us for destroying the tea, and our declarations of independence on the Parliament; but condemned strongly the measures taking here in consequence, and spoke honorably of our province and people, and of their conduct in the late war.*

* Lord Chatham said, in the speech here alluded to; "If we take a transient view of those motives, which induced the ancestors of our fellow subjects in America, to leave their native country to encounter

Mr. Lee has gone to make the tour of France and Italy, and probably will be absent near a year. Just before his departure he drew up, at my instance, a kind of answer to the Lords' Committee's Report, for which I furnished him with most of the materials. I enclose a copy of it. I had resigned your agency to him, expecting to leave England about the end of this month; but on his departure he has returned me all the papers, and I feel myself now under a kind of necessity of continuing, till you can be acquainted with this circumstance, and have time to give further orders.

I shall apply to Lord Dartmouth, agreeably to the directions of the Committee, and write to them fully, as soon as I have his Lordship's answer.

Your friendly concern on my account, lest the project for a subscription postoffice in America should prove prejudicial to me, is very obliging; but you must have learnt, before this time, that it was then superfluous, my place having been taken from me on the 31st of January. As the salary I received in that office is now ceased, and I have been lately at near two hundred pounds' expense on the province account in various ways, I am obliged to request, that some means may be fallen upon of making me a remittance here; for I have little expectation that the instruction will be recalled on my application. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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the innumerable difficulties of the unexplored regions of the western world, our astonishment at the present conduct of their descendants will naturally subside. There was no corner of the world into which men of their free and enterprising spirit would not fly with alacrity, rather than submit to the slavish and tyrannical principles, which prevailed at that period in their native country. And shall we wonder, if the descendants of such illustrious characters spurn with contempt the hand of unconstitutional power, that would snatch from them such

TO MR. COOMBE.*

Bishop of St. Asaph's Speech. — Poetry. — Use of Eloquence in a Preacher.

London, 22 July, 1774.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received with great pleasure yours of May 15th, as it informed me of your health and happiness. I thank you for your Sermon, which I read with satisfaction. I am glad that of my good Bishop† pleased you. I enclose a speech of his on the same subject. It is deemed here a masterpiece of eloquence. I send also the last edition of some lines of your friend Goldsmith, with the addition of my friend Whitefoord's epitaph, whom you may remember. Also the *Heroic Postscript*, the author of which is yet unknown. He may be fond of fame as a poet; but, if he is, his prudence predominates at present, and prevails with him to shun it.

That which you are acquiring, as an orator, gives me pleasure as your friend; and it will give you the most solid satisfaction, if you find that by your eloquence you can turn many to righteousness. Without this effect, the preacher or the priest, in my opinion, is not merely sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal,

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dear-bought privileges as they now contend for?" See the whole speech in DEBRETT'S *Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. VII. p. 10.

* In a letter to his son, dated London, February 3d, 1772, Dr Franklin says; "This will be delivered to you by the Reverend Mr. Coombe, whom I recommend to your friendship as a young gentleman of great merit, integrity, and abilities. He has acquired the esteem of all that knew him here, not as an excellent preacher only, but as practising the morality he preached. I wish him a good settlement in his native country, but I think he would better have found his interest in remaining here."

† Bishop of St. Asaph.

which are innocent things; he is rather like the cunning man in the Old Bailey, who conjures and tells fools their fortunes to cheat them out of their money.

Mrs. Stevenson and Mrs. Hewson return your compliments, with their best wishes. We have lost Mr. Hewson, and a great loss it was. My respects to your good father. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me, yours most affectionately.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN.

London, 22 July, 1774.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have had no line from you by several late opportunities. I flatter myself it is owing not to indisposition, but to the opinion of my having left England, which indeed I hope soon to do.

I enclose a letter I have just received from your goddaughter, Mrs. Barry. I wrote to you before, that she had married the captain of a ship in the Levant trade. She is now again at Tunis, where you will see she has lately lain in of her third child. Her father, you know, was a geographer,* and his daughter has some connexion, I think, with the whole globe; being born herself in America, and having her first child in Asia, her second in Europe, and now her third in Africa.

Mrs. Stevenson presents her best respects. She too is very happy in her two grandsons. Her daughter, our poor Polly, who lately lost her good husband, has

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* Lewis Evans, of Philadelphia, the author of maps and geographical writings on some parts of America.

become rich by the death of her aunt. I am ever, my dear Debby, your affectionate husband,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM A COMMITTEE OF NEW JERSEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Making Inquiry respecting the Proceedings of the Administration in England.

Burlington, 26 July, 1774.

SIR,

At the last session of Assembly we were appointed a committee, to obtain amongst other things the most early and authentic intelligence of all acts and resolutions of the Parliament of Great Britain, or the proceedings of administration, that may have relation to, or any ways affect, the liberties and privileges of America.

We know of no person so proper to make application to, on this occasion, as to you, our Agent; and we should be glad if you would favor us with any, that should come to your knowledge, or that you would point out any more proper mode to enable us more effectually to answer the purpose for which we are appointed.

We are sensible of the difficulties, which an attention to your trust has already laid you under; and it will give us great pleasure to find you rise superior to all the late attempts to do you prejudice. Perhaps the request we make may be attended with an impropriety, which escaped our attention. If it does, be pleased to favor us with your sentiments; they will be received with great respect on this, or on any other occasion; for, with great truth we can assure you, that

we should be glad of all opportunities to show the high esteem we entertain of your integrity, as well as of your abilities. We are your most humble servants and friends,

Samuel Tucker,
John Mehelm,
Robert F. Price,
Henry Paxson.

FROM JAMES BOWDOIN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Excitement produced in America by the Acts of Parliament relating to the Colonies.

Boston, 6 September, 1774.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for introducing me to the acquaintance of General Lee. He came hither from the southward about a month ago. The several acts of Parliament, relative to this town and province, will instamp infamy on the present administration, and it is probable that they themselves will soon see the beginning of it. The spirit those acts have raised throughout the colonies is surprising. It was not propagated from colony to colony, but burst forth in all of them spontaneously, as soon as the acts were known; and there is reason to hope it will be productive of a union, that will work out the salvation of the whole. The Congress now holding at Philadelphia, which was intended to effect such a union, it is earnestly wished may be the means of establishing, on a just and constitutional basis, a lasting harmony between Britain and the colonies. In the mean time, we, in this province, are, and shall be, in a disagreeable state, occasioned by the abovementioned acts.

The Port Act is made much worse, than it is in itself, by the executors of it, who have laid restraints not warranted by the act, and in many instances of their conduct have appeared destitute of every sentiment of humanity. This act was intended to be temporary, but its continuance will depend on the ministry. However, it is to be hoped it will some time or other have an end. But the act for reducing the province to a military government, from which more numerous and extensive evils will accrue, was intended to be perpetual. The people of the province are highly and universally incensed at it, and appear determined, even if they should stand alone, not to submit to it, be the consequences what they may. And the other governments, those of New England especially, are as much incensed as they, and will not suffer it to be carried into execution.

Six regiments are now here, and General Gage, it is said, has sent for two or three from Canada, and expects soon two more from Ireland. Whether he will think these, or a much greater number added to them, sufficient to enforce submission to the act, his letters to ministry will inform them, and time, everybody else. *In apricum proferet ætas.* A sort of enthusiasm seems universally prevalent, and it has been greatly heightened by the Canada Act for the encouraging and establishing Popery. "*Pro aris et focis*, our all is at stake," is the general cry throughout the country. Of this I have been in some measure a witness, having these two months past been journeying about the province with Mrs. Bowdoin, on account of her health; the bad state of which has prevented my attending the Congress, for which the Assembly thought proper to appoint me one of their committee. But it is needless to enlarge on the subject of American af-

fairs, as the worthy and ingenious gentleman, Mr. Josiah Quincy, Junior, of distinguished abilities in the profession of the law, who does me the favor to take charge of this letter, can give you the fullest information concerning them; and his information may be depended on. To him I beg leave to refer you, and at the same time take the liberty to recommend him to your friendship and acquaintance.*

I cannot conclude without expressing my indignation at the unworthy treatment you received from Wedderburn, whose illiberal and impertinent harangue answered neither of the purposes for which it was intended. It neither exculpated his client, nor fixed any dishonor on you. The dishonor of such Billingsgate is all his own, unless those that suffered it be entitled to a part of it.

I am glad to understand your retirement is not displeasing to you. In one view of it I am sure it will not be displeasing to the friends of science; as it will give you a further opportunity of exerting your happy genius in the walks of philosophy. I am, with real and great esteem, dear Sir, &c.

JAMES BOWDOIN.

P. S. I cannot learn for what reason Mr. Temple was displaced. The only one I have heard of, the sending here the letters of certain persons, you have clearly and fully obviated, by publicly taking upon yourself that most meritorious act.

* Josiah Quincy, Junior, was one of the ablest and most ardent of the patriots, who engaged at this period in the cause of their country. He went to England, where he remained a few months in a very feeble state of health, which continued during his voyage home. He died on board the vessel, when it was in sight of land, approaching Boston harbour, April 26th, 1775, at the early age of thirty-one. The interesting and valuable *Memoir of his Life*, published by his son, is well known

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Concludes to remain in England till he learns the Result of the first Congress. — Thinks the Bostonians ought not to pay for the Tea that was destroyed. — Sir William Johnson.

London, 7 September, 1774.

Dear Son,

I am glad you have met with my friend Barrows I wish you to cultivate his acquaintance, and that of Mrs. Barrows, who is an amiable woman. I am much obliged to Mr. Panton for his information relating to Mr. Parker's affairs. Cousin Jonathan Williams is now with me, and engaged in posting and settling my accounts, which will be done before the next packet, when I shall send what concerns Parker's.

You mention, that my presence is wished for at the Congress; but no person besides in America has given me the least intimation of such a desire, and it is thought by the great friends of the colonies here, that I ought to stay till the result of the Congress arrives, when my presence here may be useful. All depends on the Americans themselves. If they make, and keep firmly, resolutions not to consume British manufactures till their grievances are redressed, this ministry must fall, and the laws be repealed. This is the opinion of all the wise men here.

I hear nothing of the proposal you have made for a congress of governors. I do not wonder so much as you do, that the Massachusetts have not offered payment for the tea. First, because of the uncertainty of the act, which gives them no security that the port shall be opened on their making that payment. Secondly, no precise sum is demanded. Thirdly, no one

knows what will satisfy the custom-house officers; nor who the others are, that must be satisfied; nor what will satisfy them. And fourthly, they are in the King's power, after all, as to how much of the port shall be opened. As to "doing justice before they ask it," that should have been thought of by the legislature here, before they demanded it of the Bostonians. They have extorted many thousand pounds from America unconstitutionally, under color of acts of Parliament, and with an armed force. Of this money they ought to make restitution. They might first have taken out payment for the tea, and returned the rest. But you, who are a thorough courtier, see every thing with government eyes.

I am sorry for the loss of Sir William Johnson, especially at this time of danger from an Indian war.* I see by the papers that you were with him at the time. A Spanish war is now seriously apprehended; and the stocks of course are falling. The August packet is hourly expected, when I hope to hear of your safe return and health. Your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

TO PETER TIMOTHY, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA.

Success of the Congress will depend on the Unanimity and Firmness of its Members.

London, 7 September, 1774.

Dear Sir,

I received your favor of May 26th, and am much obliged by your kind invitation to your house, which

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* Sir William Johnson died at the place of his residence, near the Mohawk River, on the 11th of July, 1774.

I should certainly accept with pleasure, if I should ever go to Carolina.

You wish me to correspond with you on public affairs. Those relating to America have been, and still continue, in so disagreeable a situation, that I cannot write to you upon them with pleasure. Much depends on yourselves. If at the intended congress your deputies are nearly unanimous in declaring your rights, and in resolving firmly against all importations from hence till those rights are acknowledged here, you cannot well fail of carrying your point. This ministry must go out, and give place to men of juster and more generous principles. If you divide, you are lost.

I believe I shall stay here another winter, and shall be glad to hear of the welfare of you and yours. My love and blessing to my little namesake. If you send me any of your papers by the packet, I shall receive them free of expense; for, though I now pay for my letters, they do not charge me for newspapers. I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

From Samuel Cooper to B. Franklin.

Popular Excitement in Massachusetts. — Town Meetings. — General Gage. — Military Force. — Josiah Quincy, Junior.

Boston, 9 September, 1774.

Dear Sir,

My last was on the 15th of August, in which I gave you some account of the state of our affairs. About twenty of the Council appointed by the King took the oath; since which one half, not being able to stand the public odium, have resigned. All, who now

hold the commissions, not living in Boston, have retired here, under the protection of the army. Our superior court of justice met here, with the chief justice at their head; but the juries, to a man, refused to serve. The courts through the province are at an end. Sheriffs, justices, and clerks have either made their peace with the people, by solemnly promising not to act upon the new laws, or have fled to this poor proscribed town as an asylum. The lieutenant-governor, who was obliged to resign his commission as counsellor, at his house in Cambridge, being surrounded with four thousand people; and his neighbours, Sewall, the attorney-general, sheriff Phips, and Borland, live in Boston. Town meetings are held all over the province; even at Salem and in Danvers, while General Gage resided there with a regiment and two additional companies. He, indeed, ordered a warrant to be made out against the committee of correspondence in Salem, who called the meeting. Two gave bonds for their appearance, three refused and were let alone. The justice, I am told, who issued the warrant, has since acknowledged his error, and asked pardon of the people.

These things have been effected chiefly by county meetings, composed of delegates from the several towns. A provincial congress of delegates from all the counties is soon to be held at Concord. The people say, their all is at stake; they act only on the defensive; should they allow the new regulations to take place, property and life are at the mercy of men incensed against them, and they should soon be incapable of making any opposition, even a commercial one. The people assembled at Cambridge were landholders, led by captains of the towns, representatives, and committee-men. The selectmen and committee of cor-

respondence for this town went from hence to confer with them, and prevent things from coming to extremities; for a rumor had been propagated, that the whole country, incensed at the governor's taking the provincial powder by a party of soldiers from Charlestown, and inflamed by false reports, were coming to Boston to demand the restitution of the powder, in the face of the army. Happily this did not prove true; and, if there were any misapprehensions in the body, they were removed by the representations of the gentlemen from Boston, who observed to them, that the governor had a right to dispose of the provincial military stores, though not those that belong to the towns, which he had not as yet touched.

This movement of the governor occasioned, however, an extensive alarm. Reports flew through the country, that he was disarming the inhabitants of Boston, and seizing all the ammunition through the province; and that the fleet and army had attacked the town. These false reports being credited for a while, many thousands of people, especially in the western parts of the province, were immediately in arms, and in full march for this place, to relieve their brethren, or share their fate. Thousands were in motion from Connecticut; for the New England provinces are one in sentiment and spirit upon these matters; but, being informed of facts, they quietly returned home, sending their messengers from all quarters, signifying their determination to act unitedly upon any warrantable occasion.

I forgot to mention, that Commissioner Hallowell passed through Cambridge, while the body was there. He had gone by, some time, when it was stated by somebody, that it might be proper to have a conference with him. A number of men on horseback in-

stantly set out to bring him back, but were stopped immediately by some gentlemen from Boston, and dissuaded from their purpose. A single horseman of his own head went on, and, coming up to him in a chaise with a companion and servant on horseback, told him he must stop and go back. Hallowell snapped his pistol twice at him, got upon his servant's horse, rode with the utmost speed to town, followed by the horseman, till he came within call of the guard at the entrance of the town.

An apprehension was soon spread through the camp, that the country was coming in against them in armed multitudes. The guards were doubled, cannon were placed on the Neck, and the army lay on their arms through the night. The entrance into this town is now fortifying by the soldiery. The selectmen have remonstrated to the governor, that, if it goes on, the inhabitants are so uneasy, they must abandon the town; which they declare they had rather do, and see it in flames, than be totally enslaved in it. Transports are despatched to New York and Quebec for more troops, though we have already five regiments, with a large train; one more at the Castle, and another coming from Salem. At that place about thirty chests of tea lately arrived from London, which the inhabitants will not permit to be landed. What, my dear Sir, will be the end of these things? The country seems determined to run all hazards in defence of their rights.

I send this by Mr. Quincy, a gentleman bred to the law, highly esteemed for his parts and learning, a warm friend to the rights of America. He has published a pamphlet on the Port Bill, and been encouraged by some of the most respectable gentlemen among us to make a visit to England, as he is capable of giving the best account of our affairs. To him I must

refer you for farther particulars. I have wrote facts to the best of my knowledge, and, leaving you to reason or conjecture from them, I am, &c.

SAMUEL COOPER.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Abuse from his Enemies. — False Reports respecting his Conduct.

London, 26 September, 1774.

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you continue in health, as I do, thanks to God. But I wish to know how you fare in the present distress of our dear country. I am apprehensive, that the letters between us, though very innocent ones, are intercepted. They might restore to me yours at least, after reading them; especially as I never complain of broken, patched-up seals (of late very common), because I know not on whom to fix the fact.

I see in a Boston paper of August 18th, an article expressing, "that it is generally believed Dr. Franklin has received a promise of being restored to the royal favor, and promoted to an office superior to that which he resigned." I have made no public answer to any of the abuses I have received in the papers here, nor shall I to this. But as I am anxious to preserve your good opinion, and as I know your sentiments, and that you must be much afflicted yourself, and even despise me, if you thought me capable of accepting any office from this government, while it is acting with so much hostility towards my native country, I cannot miss this first opportunity of assuring you, that there is not the least foundation for such a report; that, so far from having any promise of royal favor, I hear of

nothing but royal and ministerial displeasure; which, indeed, as things at present stand, I consider as an honor. I have seen no minister since January, nor had the least communication with them. The generous and noble friends of America in both Houses do indeed favor me with their notice and regard; but they are in disgrace at court, as well as myself. Be satisfied, that I shall do nothing to lessen me in your esteem, or my own. I shall not, by the least concurrence with the present measures, merit any court favor, nor accept of any, if it were offered me, which, however, is not at all likely to happen.

As those here, who most interest themselves in behalf of America, conceive, that my being present at the arrival of the proceedings of the Congress and the meeting of Parliament may be of use, I submit to their judgment, and think it now likely, that I shall not return till spring. I am ever, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO RICHARD BACHE.

Introducing Thomas Paine.

London, 30 September, 1774

Dear Son,

The bearer, Mr. Thomas Paine, is very well recommended to me, as an ingenious, worthy young man. He goes to Pennsylvania with a view of settling there. I request you to give him your best advice and countenance, as he is quite a stranger there. If you can put him in a way of obtaining employment as a clerk, or assistant tutor in a school, or assistant surveyor, (of all which I think him very capable,) so that he may procure a subsistence at least, till he can make

acquaintance and obtain a knowledge of the country, you will do well, and much oblige your affectionate father. My love to Sally and the boys.*

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY.

Elections for a new Parliament. — Lord Percy. — The Court will persist in its Measures against America. — Inutility of Parliament as at present constructed. — His own Situation.

London, 12 October, 1774.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you on the 1st instant by Captain Cook, acquainting you with the disposition of Parliament, since which the elections are going on briskly everywhere for a new one. The electors of London, Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, and the County of Middlesex, have obliged their candidates to sign a written engagement, that they will endeavour to obtain a repeal of the late oppressive and unconstitutional American laws, and promote a reconciliation between the two countries. Their example will be followed in some other places, and it is thought would have

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* In the first letter, which Paine wrote to Dr. Franklin from Philadelphia, he said; "Your countenancing me has obtained for me many friends and much reputation, for which please to accept my sincere thanks. I have been applied to by several gentlemen to instruct their sons, on very advantageous terms to myself; and a printer and bookseller here, a man of reputation and property, Robert Aitkin, has lately attempted a Magazine, but, having little or no turn that way himself, he has applied to me for assistance. He had not above six hundred subscribers when I first assisted him. We have now upwards of fifteen hundred, and daily increasing. I have not entered into terms with him. This is only the second number. The first I was not concerned in." — *March 4th*, 1775.

been pretty general in the trading and manufacturing towns, if the suddenness of the dissolution had not hurried things too much.

It being objected to one of the candidates set up for Westminster, Lord Percy, that he is absent on the wicked business of cutting the throats of our American brethren, his friends have thought necessary this morning to publish a letter of his, expressing that he is on good terms with the people of Boston, and much respected by them. These circumstances show, that the American cause begins to be more popular here. Yet the court talk boldly of persisting in their measures, and three ships of the line are fitting out for America, which are to be over-manned, to have a double number of marines, and several armed tenders. It is rumored they are to stop all the ports of America.

Many think the new Parliament will be for reversing the late proceedings; but that depends on the court, on which every Parliament seems to be dependent; so much so, that I begin to think the Parliament here of little use to the people; for since a Parliament is always to do as a ministry would have it, why should we not be governed by the ministry in the first instance? They could afford to govern us much cheaper, the Parliament being a very expensive machine, that requires a great deal of oiling and greasing at the people's charge; for they finally pay all the enormous salaries of places, the pensions, and the bribes, now by custom become necessary to induce the members to vote according to their consciences.

My situation here is thought by many to be a little hazardous; for if, by some accident, the troops and people of New England should come to blows, I should probably be taken up; the ministerial people affecting everywhere to represent me as the cause of all the

misunderstanding; and I have been frequently cautioned to secure my papers, and by some advised to withdraw. But I venture to stay, in compliance with the wish of others, till the result of the Congress arrives, since they suppose my being here might on that occasion be of use; and I confide in my innocence, that the worst which can happen to me will be an imprisonment upon suspicion, though that is a thing I should much desire to avoid, as it may be expensive and vexatious, as well as dangerous to my health. With great respect and esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Lord Chatham's Motion for conciliatory Measures. — More Troops sent to America. — General Gage.

London, 28 January, 1775.

SIR,

It gives my mind some ease to learn, that such good care is taken both by the general and the town to prevent mischief. I hope that care will continue, and be effectual, and that people will be persuaded to wait with patience the event of the application of the Congress to the King, and the subsequent result of the ensuing Congress thereupon.

Lord Chatham moved last week in the House of Lords, that an address be presented to his Majesty, humbly beseeching him to withdraw the troops from Boston, as a step towards opening the way to conciliatory measures; but, after a long and warm debate, the motion was rejected by a majority of seventy-seven to eighteen; and open declarations were made, by the ministerial side, of the intention to enforce the

late acts. To this end, three more regiments of foot and one of dragoons, seven hundred marines, six sloops of war, and two frigates, are now under orders for America.

Petitions, however, are thronging into the House from all quarters, praying that healing measures may be taken to restore the commerce. The petition from the Congress was brought into each House among other papers by the ministers, without any particular recommendation from his Majesty, that they should be considered.

General Gage's letters being read in the House of Commons, it appears from one of them, that it had been recommended to him by Lord Dartmouth to disarm some of the colonies; which he seems to approve, if it had been practicable, but says it is not, till he is master of the country.

It is impossible to say what turn the Parliament may take before the session is over. All depends on the ministers, who possibly may change their minds, when they find the merchants and manufacturers universally dissatisfied with their present conduct; but you cannot rely upon this, and your chief dependence must be on your own virtue and unanimity, which, under God, will in time bring you through all difficulties. I am with great respect, Sir, &c,

B. FRANKLIN.*

* The following paragraph is copied from the fragment of a manuscript, in the handwriting of Franklin, which appears to have been written about this time, although the date is not given.

"A horrid spectacle to men and angels is now about to be exhibited on the stage of this globe. Two great and powerful nations are employing their forces in the destruction of civil *liberty*; that heavenly blessing, without which mankind lose half their dignity and value. One, in oppressing and enslaving a handful of men, the last assertors

TO JAMES BOWDOIN.

Conduct and Character of the Ministry. — Firmness and Union recommended to the Colonies.

London, 25 February, 1775.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of September 6th by Mr. Quincy. I thought it might be of use to publish a part of it, which was done accordingly. But the measures it so justly censures are still persisted in, and will, I trust, continue to produce effects directly contrary to those intended. They will unite, instead of dividing us, strengthen and make us more resolute, instead of intimidating us, and work our honor and advantage, instead of the disgrace and ruin designed for us.

A bill is now in hand to confine the trade of the four New England colonies to Britain and the West Indies only, and to prohibit their fishery. Other provinces have done as offensive things, but *Whiggism* is thought to be more thoroughly the principle in New England, and that is now an *unpardonable* sin. The rest, however, are to have their punishment in their turn, though perhaps less severe. That is, if this Tory

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of it within the bounds of the old Roman Commonwealth; the other, crushing in its infancy the first appearance of it in the western world

"The former seems to have lost sight of its ancient name and state; *Franks* from the *freedom* it once enjoyed; the latter, while it boasts of enjoying freedom itself, would ruin others for vindicating their common right to it. The first is acting a cruel and unmanly part, thus to use its vastly superior force against people so unable to resist it; but is however *more excusable* than the latter, as the people to be oppressed are NOT her *own children!*"

On the same paper, at the close of the above paragraph, are the following memoranda.

"The four refused petitions. Calculation of the time necessary to subdue the colonies. Instructions to dissolve Assemblies"

ministry continues in power; but, though they have by the late deceptive motion, amused many people here, so as to give an appearance as if they intended pacific measures, on which the stocks, which were falling apace, have risen again; yet, when this deceit is understood, and time proves the intended offer to America futile and ineffectual, the redoubled clamor of the trading, manufacturing, and Whig interests here will infallibly overthrow all the enemies of America, and produce an acknowledgment of her rights and satisfaction for her injuries.

If we continue firm and united, and resolutely persist in the non-consumption agreement, this adverse ministry cannot possibly stand another year. And surely the great body of our people, the farmers and artificers, will not find it hard to keep an agreement by which they both *save* and *gain*. The traders only can suffer, and, where they do really suffer, some compensation should if possible be made them. Hitherto the conduct of the colonies has given them great reputation all over Europe. By a brave perseverance, with prudence and moderation, not forward in acting offensively, but resolute in defence when necessary, they will establish a respectable character both for wisdom and courage; and then they will find friends everywhere. The eyes of all Christendom are now upon us, and our honor as a people is become a matter of the utmost consequence to be taken care of. If we tamely give up our rights in this contest, a century to come will not restore us in the opinion of the world; we shall be stamped with the character of dastards, poltrons, and fools; and be despised and trampled upon, not by this haughty, insolent nation only, but by all mankind. Present inconveniences are,

therefore, to be borne with fortitude, and better times expected.

"Informes hyemes reducit
Jupiter; idem
Summovet. Non si male nunc, et olim
Sic erit."

I am much pleased with Mr. Quincy. It is a thousand pities his strength of body is not equal to his strength of mind. His zeal for the public, like that of David for God's house, will, I fear, eat him up.

I hope Mrs. Bowdoin's health is fully established. Make my respectful compliments acceptable to her; and believe me ever, with sincere and great esteem, Dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I never could learn the cause of Mr. Temple's being displaced. The ministry refused to give any reason for it. I have imagined, that it was a suspicion of his being the author of some pieces in the papers reflecting on their measures.

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY.

Plan of Union sent by Galloway to England. — Objections to a Union. — Preliminary Articles to be agreed upon before such a Plan should be adopted. — Lord North's Proposal meant to divide rather than to conciliate the Colonies.

London, 25 February, 1775.

DEAR FRIEND,

In my last I mentioned to you my showing your plan of union to Lords Chatham and Camden. I now hear, that you had sent it to Lord Dartmouth. Lord Gower I believe alluded to it, when in the House he

censured the Congress severely, as first resolving to receive a plan for uniting the colonies to the mother country, and afterwards rejecting it, and ordering their first resolution to be erased out of their minutes. Permit me to hint to you, that it is whispered here by ministerial people, that yourself and Mr. Jay of New York are friends to their measures, and give them private intelligence of the views of the popular or country party in America. I do not believe this; but I thought it a duty of friendship to acquaint you with the report.*

I have not heard what objections were made to

* Galloway was one of the delegates to the first Congress from Pennsylvania. Neither his sentiments nor his aims accorded with those of the prominent patriots, who were assembled on that occasion. He proposed a plan of reconciliation, which was disapproved and rejected. Dr. Gordon relates the circumstances as follows. "Mr. Galloway became a member at the earnest solicitation of the Assembly, and refused compliance till they had given him instructions agreeable to his own mind, as the rule of his conduct. These instructions they suffered him to draw up. They were briefly to state the rights and the grievances of America, and to propose a plan of amicable accommodation of the differences between Great Britain and the colonies, and of a perpetual union. On the 28th of September a plan was proposed by him, which was debated a whole day, when the question was carried, six colonies to five, that it should be resumed and further considered; but it at length fell through."— *History, &c.*, Vol. I. p. 409.

Galloway published a pamphlet on the subject, which was not well received by the patriotic party. Samuel Wharton, in a letter to Dr. Franklin written in England, says; "I am really grieved at the publication of Mr. Galloway's extraordinary pamphlet. Our great friends in both Houses are extremely angry at it; while the courtiers rejoice at that part of the pamphlet, which represents our divisions and controversies, as to boundaries and modes of religion, our incompetency to resist the power of this country, and the undecided state of Congress for several weeks, as to what really were the *rights* of America. Yet the courtiers, at the same time, treat with ineffable contempt the plan of union proposed; and which, they say, by not being adopted, offended the author's pride, and has been the happy means of their being satisfactorily confirmed in their ideas of the weakness and division of the colonies; and that, by perseverance, they shall unquestionably obtain a perfect submission."— *April 17th*, 1775.

the plan in the Congress, nor would I make more than this one, that, when I consider the extreme corruption prevalent among all orders of men in this old, rotten state, and the glorious public virtue so predominant in our rising country, I cannot but apprehend more mischief than benefit from a closer union. I fear they will drag us after them in all the plundering wars, which their desperate circumstances, injustice, and rapacity, may prompt them to undertake; and their wide-wasting prodigality and profusion is a gulf that will swallow up every aid we may distress ourselves to afford them.

Here numberless and needless places, enormous salaries, pensions, perquisites, bribes, groundless quarrels, foolish expeditions, false accounts or no accounts, contracts and jobs, devour all revenue, and produce continual necessity in the midst of natural plenty. I apprehend, therefore, that to unite us intimately will only be to corrupt and poison us also. It seems like Mezentius' coupling and binding together the dead and the living.

> "Tormenti genus, et sanie taboque fluentes,
> Complexu in misero, longâ sic morte necabat."

However, I would try any thing, and bear any thing that can be borne with safety to our just liberties, rather than engage in a war with such relations, unless compelled to it by dire necessity in our own defence.

But, should that plan be again brought forward, I imagine, that, before establishing the union, it would be necessary to agree on the following preliminary articles.

1. The Declaratory Act of Parliament to be repealed.

2. All acts of Parliament, or parts of acts, laying duties on the colonies to be repealed.

3. All acts of Parliament altering the charters, or constitutions, or laws of any colony, to be repealed.

4. All acts of Parliament restraining manufactures to be repealed.

5. Those parts of the navigation acts, which are for the good of the whole empire, such as require that ships in the trade should be British or Plantation built, and navigated by three fourths British subjects, with the duties necessary for regulating commerce, to be reënacted by both Parliaments.

6. Then, to induce the Americans to see the regulating acts faithfully executed, it would be well to give the duties collected in each colony to the treasury of that colony, and let the governor and Assembly appoint the officers to collect them, and proportion their salaries. Thus the business will be cheaper and better done, and the misunderstandings between the two countries, now created and fomented by the unprincipled wretches, generally appointed from England, be entirely prevented.

These are hasty thoughts submitted to your consideration.

You will see the new proposal of Lord North, made on Monday last, which I have sent to the Committee.*

* This proposal, which was introduced into Parliament by Lord North on the 20th of February, is as follows; "That, when the Governor, Council, and Assembly, or General Court of his Majesty's provinces, or colonies, shall propose to make provision according to their respective conditions, circumstances, and situations, for contributing their proportion to the common defence; such proportion to be raised under the authorities of the General Court, or General Assembly, of such province or colony, and disposable by Parliament; and shall engage to make provision also for the support of the civil government, and the administration of justice in such province or colony; it will be proper, if such proposal shall be approved by his Majesty in Parliament, and for so long as such provision shall be made accordingly, to forbear in respect of such province or colony, to levy any duties, tax, or assessment, or to impose any further duty, tax, or assessment, except only

Those in administration, who are for violent measures, are said to dislike it. The others rely upon it as a means of *dividing*, and by that means subduing us. But I cannot conceive, that any colony will undertake to grant a revenue to a government, that holds a sword over their heads with a threat to strike the moment they cease to give, or do not give so much as it is pleased to expect. In such a situation, where is the right of giving our own property freely, or the right to judge of our own ability to give? It seems to me the language of a highwayman, who, with a pistol in your face, says, "Give me your purse, and then I will not put my hand into your pocket. But give me all your money, or I will shoot you through the head." With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

London, 26 February, 1775.

DEAR SIR,

I received, and perused with great pleasure, the letter you honored me with, by your amiable and valuable son. I thank you for introducing me to the acquaintance of a person so deserving of esteem for his public and private virtues. I hope for your sake, and that of his friends and country, that his present indisposition may wear off, and his health be established. His coming over has been of great service to our cause, and would have been much greater, if his constitution would have borne the fatigues of being

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such duties as it may be expedient to impose for the regulation of commerce; the net produce of the duties last mentioned, to be carried to the account of such province, colony, or plantation respectively.' — *Almon's Parliamentary Register*, Vol. I. p. 196.

more frequently in company. He can acquaint you so fully with the state of things here, that my enlarging upon them will be unnecessary. I most sincerely wish him a prosperous voyage, and a happy meeting with his friends and family; and to you, my old dear friend, and the rest of those you love, every kind of felicity; being, with the truest esteem and affection, yours, B. FRANKLIN.*

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* Dr. Franklin left England, in the Pennsylvania Packet, about the 20th of March. From a letter, dated March 17th, and written to a friend on the continent, whose name is not mentioned in the draft from which an extract is here taken, it appears that he thought of returning in a few months.

"Being about to embark for America, this line is just to take leave, wishing you every kind of felicity, and to request, that if you have not yet purchased for me the *Theatrum Machinarum*, you will now omit doing it, as I have the offer of a set here. But, if you have purchased it, your draft on me will be duly paid in my absence by Mrs. Stevenson, in whose hands I leave my little affairs till my return, which I propose, God willing, in October. Mrs. Stevenson keeps the house in Craven Street, wherein I have always lodged since my residence in London.

"Be pleased to present my humble respects to your good Prince, with my best wishes for his prosperity, and repeat my thankful acknowledgment for his gracious and benevolent proposition in my favor, of which, though I could not, for the reasons I gave you, avail myself, I shall nevertheless always retain the most grateful sense, and if, either here or in America, I could render his highness any kind of service, it would give me infinite pleasure."

He arrived in Philadelphia on the 5th of May. The Pennsylvania Assembly was then sitting. The following resolve is contained in the Votes of the House. "*May 6th.* Resolved unanimously, that Benjamin Franklin be, and he is hereby, added to the deputies appointed by this House on the part of Pennsylvania, to attend the Continental Congress expected to meet on the 10th instant in this city."

CORRESPONDENCE,

PART THIRD;

COMPRISING

LETTERS PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL,

FROM

THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

TO

THE END OF THE AUTHOR'S MISSION TO FRANCE

1775 — 1785.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

State of America on Dr. Franklin's Arrival there.

Philadelphia, 16 May, 1775.

DEAR FRIEND,

You will have heard, before this reaches you, of a march stolen by the regulars into the country by night, and of their *expedition* back again. They retreated twenty miles in six hours.* The governor had called the Assembly to propose Lord North's pacific plan, but, before the time of their meeting, began cutting of throats. You know it was said he carried the sword in one hand, and the olive branch in the other; and it seems he chose to give them a taste of the sword first.

He is doubling his fortifications at Boston, and hopes to secure his troops till succour arrives. The place indeed is naturally so defensible, that I think them in no danger. All America is exasperated by his conduct, and more firmly united than ever. The breach between the two countries is grown wider, and in danger of becoming irreparable.

I had a passage of six weeks, the weather constantly so moderate that a London wherry might have accompanied us all the way I got home in the even-

* Alluding to the affair at Lexington and Concord.

ing, and the next morning was unanimously chosen by the Assembly of Pennsylvania, a delegate to the Congress now sitting.

In coming over, I made a valuable philosophical discovery, which I shall communicate to you when I can get a little time.* At present, I am extremely hurried. Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

His Return from England. — Chosen a Member of the Continental Congress.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1775.

DEAR SISTER,

I have just now heard by Mr. Adams, that you are come out of Boston, and are at Warwic, in Rhode Island. I suppose it must be at good Mr. and Mrs. Greene's, to whom present my affectionate respects. I write this line just to let you know, that I am returned well from England, and that I found my family well; but have not found the repose I wished for, being the next morning after my arrival delegated to the Congress by our Assembly.

I wish to hear from you, and to know how you have left your affairs in Boston; and whether it would be inconvenient for you to come hither, or you wish rather that I should come to see you, if the business I am engaged in will permit. Let me know if you want any assistance, and what is become of cousin Williams and his family, and other friends. Jonathan

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* Alluding to his experiments with a thermometer in crossing the Gulf Stream. See Vol. VI. pp. 487, 498.

was at Paris when I left England, but to return in a week or two. I am ever, my dear sister, your very loving brother,

B. Franklin.

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN.*

Philadelphia, 5 July, 1775.

Mr. Strahan,

You are a member of Parliament, and one of that majority, which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns, and murder our people. Look upon your hands, they are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am,

Yours,

B. Franklin.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

Proceedings of the British Government render Conciliation hopeless. — Conduct of General Gage in Boston. — Franklin's Occupations.

Philadelphia, 7 July, 1775.

Dear Friend,

The Congress met at a time when all minds were so exasperated by the perfidy of General Gage, and his attack on the country people, that propositions for

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* A French editor takes this letter in serious part, and laments that political causes should produce such a breach in a long and cordial friendship. But in truth, it was meant to be nothing more than a pleasantry, as is evident from the tone of the subsequent correspondence between Franklin and Strahan, which continued through life. A copy of the letter was procured from Mr. Strahan, and it was printed in the English newspapers soon after it was received.

attempting an accommodation were not much relished; and it has been with difficulty that we have carried another humble petition to the crown, to give Britain one more chance, one opportunity more, of recovering the friendship of the colonies; which, however, I think she has not sense enough to embrace, and so I conclude she has lost them for ever.

She has begun to burn our seaport towns; secure, I suppose, that we shall never be able to return the outrage in kind. She may doubtless destroy them all; but, if she wishes to recover our commerce, are these the probable means? She must certainly be distracted; for no tradesman out of Bedlam ever thought of increasing the number of his customers, by knocking them on the head; or of enabling them to pay their debts, by burning their houses. If she wishes to have us subjects, and that we should submit to her as our compound sovereign, she is now giving us such miserable specimens of her government, that we shall ever detest and avoid it, as a complication of robbery, murder, famine, fire, and pestilence.

You will have heard, before this reaches you, of the treacherous conduct of General Gage to the remaining people in Boston, in detaining their goods, after stipulating to let them go out with their effects, on pretence that merchants' goods were not effects; the defeat of a great body of his troops by the country people at Lexington; some other small advantages gained in skirmishes with their troops; and the action at Bunker's Hill, in which they were twice repulsed, and the third time gained a dear victory. Enough has happened, one would think, to convince your ministers, that the Americans will fight, and that this is a harder nut to crack than they imagined.

We have not yet applied to any foreign power for

assistance, nor offered our commerce for their friendship. Perhaps we never may; yet it is natural to think of it, if we are pressed. We have now an army on the establishment, which still holds yours besieged. My time was never more fully employed. In the morning at six, I am at the Committee of Safety, appointed by the Assembly to put the province in a state of defence; which committee holds till near nine, when I am at the Congress, and that sits till after four in the afternoon. Both these bodies proceed with the greatest unanimity, and their meetings are well attended. It will scarce be credited in Britain, that men can be as diligent with us from zeal for the public good, as with you for thousands per annum. Such is the difference between uncorrupted new states, and corrupted old ones.

Great frugality and great industry are now become fashionable here. Gentlemen, who used to entertain with two or three courses, pride themselves now in treating with simple beef and pudding. By these means, and the stoppage of our consumptive trade with Britain, we shall be better able to pay our voluntary taxes for the support of our troops. Our savings in the article of trade amount to near five millions sterling per annum.

I shall communicate your letter to Mr. Winthrop; but the camp is at Cambridge, and he has as little leisure for philosophy as myself. Believe me ever, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Philadelphia, 8 July, 1775.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter of April 14th. It grieves me, that the present situation of public affairs makes it not eligible for you to come hither with your family, because I am sure you would otherwise like this country, and might provide better here for your children, at the same time that I should be made more happy by your neighbourhood and company. I flatter myself, that this may yet happen, and that our public disputes may be ended by the time your private business is settled to your mind, and then we may be all happy together.

The debt you mention of mine to Bolton remains unpaid through his own neglect. I was charged by Matthews ten pounds for the tea-kitchen, but Bolton told me I ought not to pay so much; that he would see what it should be when he got home, and send me word, which he never did. I dunned him for it by letters, as often as Matthews sent to me, but received no answer.

I take it kindly of my godson, that he should remember me; my love to him. I am glad to hear the dear children are all well through the measles. I have much delight in my godsons. Mr. and Mrs. Bache join in love to yours. Ben,* when I delivered him your blessing, inquired the age of Elizabeth, and thought her yet too young for him; but, as he made no other objection, and that will lessen every day, I have only to wish being alive to dance with your mother at the wedding. Temple was much obliged by your kind

* Benjamin Franklin Bache, grandson of Dr. Franklin.

remembrance of him. He is now very happy with his father at Amboy, near New York, but returns to me in September, to prosecute his studies in our College.

I am much pleased with the contribution letter, and thank you for your share of it. I am still well and hearty, and never went through more business than I do at present. God knows when I shall be permitted to enjoy the repose I wish. Adieu, my very dear friend. Continue your pleasing correspondence, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO PETER V. B. LIVINGSTON.*

Powder for the Use of the Troops in New York.

Perth Amboy, 29 August, 1775.

SIR,

The Committee of Safety acquainted you by a letter, dated the 26th instant, that we had ordered a ton of gunpowder to be sent to you, agreeably to your request. It left Philadelphia early on Sunday morning, and yesterday I overtook the wagon on the road at Trenton, and left it proceeding on the journey. But, being informed this morning at Brunswic, that four wagon loads of powder had passed through that place on Friday evening for your city, and supposing it to be the powder, which you mentioned as having been expected, but not arrived, which occasioned your sending to us; and, as we have still too little at Phila-

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* Chairman of the Committee of Safety in New York. Dr. Franklin was chairman of a similar committee in Philadelphia. When this letter was written, he was on a visit to his son, the governor of New Jersey, who then resided at Perth Amboy.

delphia, I thought it best to stop that powder, and send it back again, and wrote accordingly to the wagoner by a person just setting out for Trenton. I write this, therefore, that you may not expect it at New York in consequence of our letter. With great respect and esteem, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

First Campaign made by the British Forces in America.

Philadelphia, 3 October 1775

Dear Sir,

I am to set out to-morrow for the camp, and, having but just heard of this opportunity, can only write a line to say that I am well and hearty.* Tell our dear good friend, Dr. Price, who sometimes has his doubts and despondencies about our firmness, that America is determined and unanimous; a very few Tories and placemen excepted, who will probably soon export themselves. Britain, at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head; and at Bunker's Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data* his mathematical head will easily calculate the time and

* On the 30th of September, Congress appointed Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Harrison, as a committee to confer with General Washington, concerning the best mode of supporting and regulating the Continental army. The committee proceeded to the camp at Cambridge, and the conference was held on the 18th of October. See *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III. p. 123.

expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory. My sincere respects to ——, and to the club of honest whigs at ——. Adieu. I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND.*

Measures of the British Government tend to a speedy Separation between Great Britain and the Colonies.

Philadelphia, 3 October, 1775.

DEAR SIR,

I wish as ardently as you can do for peace, and should rejoice exceedingly in coöperating with you to that end. But every ship from Britain brings some intelligence of new measures that tend more and more to exasperate; and it seems to me, that until you have found by dear experience the reducing us by force impracticable, you will think of nothing fair and reasonable.

We have as yet resolved only on defensive measures. If you would recall your forces and stay at home, we should meditate nothing to injure you. A little time so given for cooling on both sides would have excellent effects. But you will goad and provoke us. You despise us too much; and you are insensible of the Italian adage, that there is no *little enemy*. I am persuaded that the body of the British people are our friends; but they are changeable, and by your lying gazettes may soon be made our enemies. Our respect for them will proportionably di-

* This letter was first printed in Mr. Vaughan's edition, but without the name of the person to whom it was written; and it has never since been made public. Probably it was David Hartley

minish, and I see clearly we are on the high road to mutual family hatred and detestation. A separation of course will be inevitable. It is a million of pities so fair a plan as we have hitherto been engaged in, for increasing strength and empire with public felicity, should be destroyed by the mangling hands of a few blundering ministers. It will not be destroyed; God will protect and prosper it, you will only exclude yourselves from any share in it. We hear, that more ships and troops are coming out. We know, that you may do us a great deal of mischief, and are determined to bear it patiently as long as we can. But, if you flatter yourselves with beating us into submission, you know neither the people nor the country. The Congress are still sitting, and will wait the result of their *last* petition. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.*

Requesting him to ascertain from the Ambassadors at the Hague, whether any of the European Courts are disposed to afford Assistance to the American Colonies in their Struggle for Independence. — Instructions on this Subject. — State of Affairs in America.

Philadelphia, 9 December, 1775.

DEAR SIR,

I received your several favors, of May 18th, June 30th, and July 8th, by Messrs. Vaillant and Pochard:

* Charles William Frederick Dumas was a native of Switzerland, but he passed much of his life in Holland. He was a man of great learning, and, in the preface and notes to his edition of Vattel, and in other writings, had expressed sentiments favorable to liberty and free institutions. Dr Franklin became personally acquainted with him in Holland, and formed so favorable an opinion of his ability and character, that

whom if I could serve upon your recommendation, it would give me great pleasure. Their total want of English is at present an obstruction to their getting any employment among us; but I hope they will soon obtain some knowledge of it. This is a good country for artificers or farmers; but gentlemen of mere science in *les belles lettres* cannot so easily subsist here, there being little demand for their assistance among an industrious people, who, as yet, have not much leisure for studies of that kind.

I am much obliged by the kind present you have made us of your edition of Vattel. It came to us in good season, when the circumstances of a rising state make it necessary frequently to consult the law of nations. Accordingly that copy, which I kept, (after depositing one in our own public library here, and sending the other to the College of Massachusetts Bay, as you directed,) has been continually in the hands of the members of our Congress, now sitting, who are much pleased with your notes and preface, and have entertained a high and just esteem for their author. Your manuscript "*Idée sur le Gouvernement et la Royauté*"

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he recommended him to the *Committee of Secret Correspondence*, as a suitable person to be employed in their service. He accepted the commission, and was a very faithful agent during the whole revolution, and for some years after the peace. When Mr. John Adams was minister from the United States in Holland, Mr. Dumas performed the office of secretary and translator; and, after Mr. Adams's departure, he acted for some time in the capacity of *Chargé d'Affaires*, and exchanged with the Dutch government the ratification of the treaty negotiated by Mr. Adams. See *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*. Vol. IX. p. 253.

The *Committee of Secret Correspondence* was appointed by Congress on the 29th of November, 1775, for the purpose of corresponding with persons in Europe, who were supposed to be friends to the American cause. The above letter was written by Dr. Franklin, as a member of that committee. On the 17th of April, 1777, the style of the committee was changed to that of the *Committee of Foreign Affairs*.

is also well relished, and may, in time, have its effect. I thank you, likewise, for the other smaller pieces, which accompanied Vattel. "*Le court Exposé de ce qui s'est passé entre la Cour Britannique et les Colonies.*" *&c.* being a very concise and clear statement of facts, will be reprinted here for the use of our new friends in Canada. The translations of the proceedings of our Congress are very acceptable. I send you herewith what of them has been farther published here, together with a few newspapers, containing accounts of some of the successes Providence has favored us with. We are threatened from England with a very powerful force, to come next year against us. We are making all the provision in our power here to oppose that force, and we hope we shall be able to defend ourselves. But, as the events of war are always uncertain, possibly, after another campaign, we may find it necessary to ask the aid of some foreign power.

It gives us great pleasure to learn from you, that *toute l'Europe nous souhaite le plus heureux succès pour le maintien de nos libertés.* But we wish to know, whether any one of them, from principles of humanity, is disposed magnanimously to step in for the relief of an oppressed people; or whether, if, as it seems likely to happen, we should be obliged to break off all connexion with Britain, and declare ourselves an independent people, there is any state or power in Europe, who would be willing to enter into an alliance with us for the benefit of our commerce, which amounted, before the war, to near seven millions sterling per annum, and must continually increase, as our people increase most rapidly. Confiding, my dear friend, in your good will to us and to our cause, and in your sagacity and abilities for business, the committee of Congress, appointed for the purpose of establishing

and conducting a correspondence with our friends in Europe, of which committee I have the honor to be a member, have directed me to request of you, that, as you are situated at the Hague, where ambassadors from all the courts reside, you would make use of the opportunity that situation affords you, of discovering, if possible, the disposition of the several courts with respect to such assistance or alliance, if we should apply for the one, or propose the other. As it may possibly be necessary, in particular instances, that you should, for this purpose, confer directly with some great ministers, and show them this letter as your credential, we only recommend it to your discretion, that you proceed therein with such caution, as to keep the same from the knowledge of the English ambassador, and prevent any public appearance, at present, of your being employed in any such business; as thereby we imagine many inconveniences may be avoided, and your means of rendering us service increased.

That you may be better able to answer some questions, which will probably be put to you, concerning our present situation, we inform you, that the whole continent is very firmly united, the party for the measures of the British ministry being very small, and much dispersed; that we have had on foot, the last campaign, an army of near twenty-five thousand men, wherewith we have been able, not only to block up the King's army in Boston, but to spare considerable detachments for the invasion of Canada, where we have met with great success, as the printed papers sent herewith will inform you, and have now reason to expect the whole province may be soon in our possession; that we purpose greatly to increase our force for the ensuing year, and thereby we hope, with the assistance of a well disciplined militia, to be able to

defend our coast, notwithstanding its great extent; that we have already a small squadron of armed vessels to protect our coasting trade, who have had some success in taking several of the enemy's cruisers, and some of their transport vessels and store ships. This little naval force we are about to augment, and expect it may be more considerable in the next summer.

We have hitherto applied to no foreign power. We are using the utmost industry in endeavouring to make saltpetre, and with daily increasing success. Our artificers are also everywhere busy in fabricating small arms, casting cannon, &c.; yet both arms and ammunition are much wanted. Any merchants, who would venture to send ships laden with those articles, might make great profit; such is the demand in every colony, and such generous prices are and will be given; of which, and of the manner of conducting such a voyage, the bearer, Mr. Story, can more fully inform you; and whoever brings in those articles is allowed to carry off the value in provisions, to our West Indies, where they will probably fetch a very high price, the general exportation from North America being stopped. This you will see more particularly in a printed resolution of the Congress.

We are in great want of good engineers, and wish you could engage and send us two able ones, in time for the next campaign, one acquainted with field service, sieges, &c., and the other with fortifying of seaports. They will, if well recommended, be made very welcome, and have honorable appointments, besides the expenses of their voyage h'ther, in which Mr. Story can also advise them. As what we now request of you, besides taking up you time, may put you to some expense, we send you for the present, enclosed, a bill for one hundred pounds sterling, to defray such ex-

penses, and desire you to be assured that your services will be considered, and honorably rewarded, by the Congress.

We desire, also, that you would take the trouble of receiving from Arthur Lee, agent for the Congress in England, such letters as may be sent by him to your care, and of forwarding them to us with your despatches. When you have occasion to write to him to inform him of any thing, which it may be of importance that our friends there should be acquainted with, please to send your letters to him, under cover, directed to Mr. Alderman Lee, merchant, on Tower Hill, London; and do not send it by post, but by some trusty shipper, or other prudent person, who will deliver it with his own hand. And when you send to us, if you have not a direct safe opportunity, we recommend sending by way of St. Eustatia, to the care of Messrs. Robert and Cornelius Stevenson, merchants there, who will forward your despatches to me. With sincere and great esteem and respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO HIS MOST SERENE HIGHNESS, DON GABRIEL OF BOURBON.

On receiving his Version of Sallust.

Philadelphia, 12 December, 1775.

Illustrious Prince,

I have just received, through the hands of the ambassador of Spain, the much esteemed present your most Serene Highness hath so kindly sent me, of your excellent version of Sallust.*

* The famous Latin and Spanish edition of Sallust, printed in 1772, by Ibarra, at the Royal Press in Madrid. This edition, which is an imperial quarto, is considered by bibliographers as a master-piece of

I am extremely sensible of the honor done me, and beg you would accept my thankful acknowledgments. I wish I could send hence any American literary production worthy of your perusal; but as yet the Muses have scarcely visited these remote regions. Perhaps, however, the proceedings of our American Congress, just published, may be a subject of some curiosity at your court. I therefore take the liberty of sending your Highness a copy, with some other papers, which contain accounts of the successes wherewith Providence has lately favored us. Therein your wise politicians may contemplate the first efforts of a rising state, which seems likely soon to act a part of some importance on the stage of human affairs, and furnish materials for a future Sallust. I am very old, and can scarce hope to see the event of this great contest; but, looking forward, I think I see a powerful dominion growing up here, whose interest it will be, to form a close and firm alliance with Spain, (their territories bordering,) and who, being united, will be able, not only to preserve their own people in peace, but to repel the force of all the other powers in Europe. It seems, therefore, prudent on both sides to cultivate a good understanding, that may hereafter be so useful to both; towards which a fair foundation is already laid in our minds, by the well founded popular opinion entertained here of Spanish integrity and honor. I hope my presumption in hinting this will be pardoned. If in any thing on this side the globe I can render either service or pleasure to your Royal Highness, your commands will make me happy. With the utmost esteem and veneration, I have the honor to be your Serene Highness's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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typography. Dibden remarks, that it "is very rare, as the Prince, Don Gabriel, reserved all the copies for presents."

TO CHARLES LEE.*

Saltpetre and Powder. — Use of Bows and Arrows in War. — Polydore Virgil. — Acceptable Terms of Conciliation not expected from England.

Philadelphia, 11 February, 1776

DEAR SIR,

The bearer, M. Arundel, is directed by the Congress to repair to General Schuyler, in order to be employed by him in the artillery service. He proposes to wait on you in his way, and has requested me to introduce him by a line to you. He has been an officer in the French service, as you will see by his commissions; and, professing a good will to our cause, I hope he may be useful in instructing our gunners and matrosses. Perhaps he may advise in opening the nailed cannon. I received the enclosed, the other day, from an officer, Mr. Newland, who served in the two last wars, and was known by General Gates, who spoke well of him to me when I was at Cambridge. He is desirous now of entering into your service. I have advised him to wait upon you at New York.

They still talk big in England, and threaten hard; but their language is somewhat civiler, at least not quite so disrespectful to us. By degrees they come to their senses, but too late, I fancy, for their interest.

We have got a large quantity of saltpetre, one hundred and twenty tons, and thirty more expected. Powder-mills are now wanting. I believe we must set to work and make it by hand. But I still wish,

* General Lee now had the command in New York, and was engaged in constructing works of defence. See SPARKS's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. I pp. 75–88; and *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III. pp. 230, 273, 292.

with you, that pikes could be introduced, and I would add bows and arrows. These were good weapons, not wisely laid aside;

1st. Because a man may shoot as truly with a bow as with a common musket.

2dly. He can discharge four arrows in the time of charging and discharging one bullet.

3dly. His object is not taken from his view by the smoke of his own side.

4thly. A flight of arrows, seen coming upon them, terrifies and disturbs the enemies' attention to their business.

5thly. An arrow striking in any part of a man puts him *hors du combat* till it is extracted.

6thly. Bows and arrows are more easily provided everywhere than muskets and ammunition.

Polydore Virgil, speaking of one of our battles against the French in Edward the Third's reign, mentions the great confusion the enemy was thrown into, *sagittarum nube*, from the English; and concludes, *Est res profecto dictu mirabilis, ut tantus ac potens exercitus a solis fere Anglicis sagittariis victus fuerit; adeo Anglus est sagittipotens, et id genus armorum valet.* If so much execution was done by arrows when men wore some defensive armour, how much more might be done now that it is out of use.

I am glad you are come to New York, but I also wish you could be in Canada. There is a kind of suspense in men's minds here at present, waiting to see what terms will be offered from England. I expect none that we can accept; and, when that is generally seen, we shall be more unanimous and more decisive. Then your proposed solemn league and covenant will go better down, and perhaps most of your other strong measures will be adopted. I am

always glad to hear from you, but I do not deserve your favors, being so bad a correspondent. My eyes will now hardly serve me to write by night, and these short days have been all taken up by such a variety of business, that I seldom can sit down ten minutes without interruption. God give you success. I am, with the greatest esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM JOSEPH PRIESTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Dr. Price. — Conduct of the Ministry. — Philosophical Experiments. — Fixed Air.

London, 13 February, 1776.

Dear Sir,

I lament this unhappy war, as on more serious accounts, so not a little, that it renders my correspondence with you so precarious. I have had three letters from you, and have written as often; but the last, by Mr. Temple, I have been informed he could not take. What is become of it, I cannot tell.

This accompanies a copy of my second volume of *Observations on Air*, and a pamphlet, which may perhaps make you smile. Major Carleton, brother to the governor of Quebec, has undertaken to convey the parcel to you.

By the same hand you will receive a most excellent pamphlet by Dr. Price, which, if any thing can, will, I hope, make some impression upon this infatuated nation. An edition of a thousand copies has been nearly sold in two days; but, when Lord George Germain is at the head of affairs, it cannot be expected that any thing like *reason* or *moderation* should be attended to. Every thing breathes rancor and despera-

tion, and nothing but absolute impotence will stop their proceedings. We therefore look upon a final separation from you as a certain and speedy event. If any thing can unite us, it must be the immediate adopting of the measures proposed by Lord Shelburne, and mentioned in Dr. Price's pamphlet. As, however, it is most probable that you will be driven to the necessity of governing yourselves, I hope you have wisdom to guard against the rocks that we have fatally split upon, and make some better provision for securing your natural rights against the encroachment of power in whomsoever placed.

Amidst the alarms and distresses of war, it may perhaps give you some pleasure to be informed, that I have been very successful in the prosecution of my *experiments*, since the publication of my second volume. I have lately sent to the Royal Society some *Observations on Blood*, which I believe have given great satisfaction to my medical friends, proving that the use of it, in respiration, is to discharge phlogiston from the system, that is, has the same power of affecting air, when congealed and out of the body, that it has when fluid and in the body, and acts through a bladder and a large quantity of serum, as well as in immediate contact with the air. In pure air it becomes of a florid red, and in phlogisticated air, black; and the air to which it has been exposed is affected in the same manner, as it is by respiration, the calcination of metals, or any other phlogistic process.

I am now in a very promising course of experiments on *metals*, from all of which, dissolved in spirit of nitre, I get first nitrous air as before, and then, distilling to dryness, from the same materials, *fixed air*, and dephlogisticated air. This proves that fixed air is certainly a modification of the nitrous acid. I have

however, got no fixed air from gold or silver. You will smile when I tell you, that I do not absolutely despair of the transmutation of metals.

In one of your letters, you mention your having made a valuable discovery on your passage to America, and promise to write me a particular account of it. If you ever did this, the letter has miscarried, for which I shall be sorry, and the more so as I now almost despair of hearing from you any more till these troubles are settled.

The club of *honest Whigs*, as you justly call them, think themselves much honored by your having been one of them, and also by your kind remembrance of them. Our zeal in the good cause is not abated; you are often the subject of our conversation. Not to burden my friend too much, I give him only one copy of my book; but I hope you will communicate it to Professor Winthrop, with my most respectful compliments. I am, &c.

J. Priestley.

P. S. Lord Shelburne and Colonel Barré were pleased with your remembrance of them, and desire their best respects and good wishes in return. The best thing I can wish the friendly bearer of this letter is, that he may fall into your hands, as I am sure he will meet with good treatment, and perhaps have the happiness of conversing with you, a happiness which I now regret. Your old servant, Fevre, often mentions you with affection and respect. He is, in all respects, an excellent servant. I value him much, both on his own account and yours. He seems to be very happy. Mrs. Stevenson is much as usual. She can talk about nothing but you.

TO CHARLES LEE.

Introducing Thomas Paine, the Author of "Common Sense."

Philadelphia, 19 February, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I rejoice that you are going to Canada. I hope the gout will not have the courage to follow you into that severe climate. I believe you will have the number of men you wish for. I am told there will be two thousand more, but there are always deficiencies.*

The bearer, Mr. Paine, has requested a line of introduction to you, which I give the more willingly, as I know his sentiments are not very different from yours. He is the reputed, and, I think, the real author of *Common Sense*, a pamphlet that has made great impression here. I do not enlarge, both because he waits, and because I hope for the pleasure of conferring with you face to face in Canada. I will only add, that we are assured here on the part of France, that the troops sent to the West Indies have no inimical views to us or our cause. It is thought they intend a war without a previous declaration. God prosper all your undertakings, and return you with health, honor, and happiness. Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* Congress had ordered General Lee to repair to Canada, and take the command there; but his destination was soon after changed, and he went to the south.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Urging Measures of Reconciliation between Great Britain and the Colonies.

London, 24 February, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

It is so long since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, that I fear the administration has but too effectually stopped the channel of communication between this country and its colonies. I have always dreaded this event, as fatal and final to the prospect of a national reconciliation. When, in any contention, the parties are not only studiously kept asunder, but mischief-making go-betweens exert every art, and practise every fraud, to inflame jealousies, animosities, and resentments between them, it is but too obvious to fear, that your own prophetic words should be accomplished; that, instead of that cordial affection, which once and so long existed, and that harmony so suitable to the happiness, safety, strength, and welfare of both countries, a mutual hatred, such as we see subsisting between the Spaniards and Portuguese, the Genoese and Corsicans, should fatally take root between the parent state and its colonies.

These fears are not abated by the consideration of the incessant injuries, which have been, and which continue to be, heaped upon our unhappy fellow subjects

* The original of this letter is in the handwriting of David Hartley, but signed "G. B." a signature which Mr. Hartley affixed to many of his letters to Dr. Franklin, written during the revolution. Mr. Hartley was a member of Parliament, and opposed to the ministerial measures in regard to America. He made several attempts, at the beginning of the troubles, to effect a reconciliation between the two countries; and was not less active afterwards in endeavouring to procure a peace. He was likewise unwearied in his benevolent exertions for the relief of the American prisoners in England during the war.

in America. These injuries are, indeed, brought upon them by the administration, who usurp the authority, which they pretend to derive from the people; but, from the distance between us and our American brethren, and the false evidence transmitted from one to the other, I greatly fear that national resentments will become indiscriminate. It is inseparable from human nature, that the mind, under any grievous suffering, especially injury, will be distracted and broken from its nearest connexions, which may happen to be but accidentally involved. The affection of states to each other consists of the combination of personal affections, parentage, and intercourse. When blood is shed, and the parent weeps for his son, the widow for her husband, brother for brother, an inextinguishable resentment arises. Those unfortunates, who have lost their relatives and friends, become furious; and in those, who have them yet to lose, horrors and fears take place of and drive out affection; the bonds of attachment are let loose, and all the tumultuous passions are set afloat.

I know, that you are as sensible of these consequences as any one can be. You have foreseen them afar off. You have predicted them; you have done every thing in your power to soften animosities, and to put off the evil day. I hope still, that you will not despair. Your age, experience, character, humanity, and example of moderation in disregarding those injuries and insults, which have been offered to yourself, give you the best title to plead with your countrymen to suspend their resentments, to discriminate those who have not injured them, and to remember the ties of affection between themselves and their fellow subjects in England. I see the influence of your counsels in the Congress. I see the distinction clear-

ly made between the ministry and the people of England; but I fear that, at the same time, the seeds of jealousy are struggling to break out.

The address from the Congress to the Assembly of Jamaica speaks of the people of England as dissipated and corrupt. The people of England are far otherwise. They are just and generous; and, if it were put to the sense of the people of England, you would not be left in any doubt whether it was *want of will*, or *want of power*, to do you justice. You know the blot of our constitution, by which, to our disgrace, and to your misfortune, a corrupt ministry, sheltered by Parliamentary influence, are out of our immediate control. A day of account may come, when the justice of the nation may prevail; and, if it comes not too late, it may prove a day of reconciliation and cordial reunion between us and America. The trial is with you, to suspend your resentments from becoming indiscriminate; and a great trial it is. I cannot tell you what efforts the ministry have in their purpose to try. I am amazed at their headstrong hardiness to proceed in an undertaking, which gives them so little prospect of success.

Many of your best friends in England regret, that the Congress has not made some specific and definite proposition, upon which the sense of the people of England might have been consulted. A people at large cannot enter into historical details, especially when facts are so studiously confounded and misrepresented, but still they could judge of a simple proposition. If any such had been made, I think it would have been the most likely method to captivate the good will of the nation. While the propositions of the Congress are general and indefinite, the ministry treat them as general words, meaning little or nothing in fact. But,

I think, the further prosecution of hostile measures could not be supported by the ministry, if they were to refuse any definite and equitable offer of accommodation, made on the part of America. If it be possible, let the two countries be once more reunited in affection. It is not simply peace that we ought to strive for, but reconciliation, which is more than peace. We may have peace with foreign states, but it must be reconciliation alone that can reunite us as one people. However forlorn the prospect may be, let not the common friends slacken their endeavours. Constancy is our only hope. All is lost, if we despair. I am, dear Sir, with the greatest regard and esteem, affectionately yours, G. B.

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER.*

Commissioners appointed by Congress to go to Canada.

Philadelphia, 11 March, 1776.

SIR,

The Congress have appointed three Commissioners to go to Canada, of which number I have the honor to be one.† We purpose setting out some day this

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* General Schuyler had at this time the command of the northern department, and of the army operating in Canada.

† The other commissioners were Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll. They were appointed on the 15th of February. To these were joined the Reverend John Carroll, a Catholic clergyman, afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore. He was not officially one of the Commissioners, but was requested to accompany them, it being supposed, that, from his religious sentiments, character, and knowledge of the French language, his presence and counsels might be useful in promoting the objects of the mission with the Canadians. An American army was at that time in Canada, under the command of General Wooster, who was shortly after succeeded by General Thomas. The Commissioners were

week. I take the liberty of mentioning this, as, possibly, a little previous notice may enable you more easily to make any preparation you shall judge necessary to facilitate and expedite our journey, which, I am sure, you will be kindly disposed to do for us. A friend with us will make our company four, besides our servants. We shall either go in carriages directly to Albany, or by water, if the river is open, from New York. Hoping soon for the pleasure of seeing you, I now only add, that I am, with the sincerest respect and esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The bearer, M. La Jeunesse, has been considered by the Congress as a friend to the American cause, and he is recommended to your protection on his return to Canada.

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furnished with full instructions, and with the following commission, which was signed by the President of Congress.

"We, reposing special trust and confidence in your zeal, fidelity, abilities, and assiduity, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you, or any two of you, Commissioners for and on behalf of us, and all the people of the United Colonies, whom we represent, to promote or form a union between the said colonies and the people of Canada, according to the instructions herewith delivered to you, and such as you may hereafter receive; and to execute all such matters and things as you are or shall be directed by your said instructions; and we do require all officers, soldiers, and others, who may facilitate your negotiation, or promote the success thereof, to aid and assist you therein; and you are, from time to time, to transmit and report your proceedings to Congress. This commission to continue in force till revoked by this or a future Congress." — *Journals, March 20th,* 1776.

TO LORD STIRLING.*

Journey to Canada.

Brunswic, 27 March, 1776.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received your obliging letter some days since at Philadelphia; but, our departure from thence being uncertain, I could not till now acquaint your Lordship when we expected to be at New York. We move but slowly, and I think we shall scarce reach Newark before to-morrow, so that we cannot have the pleasure of seeing you before Friday. Being myself, from long absence, as much a stranger in New York as the other gentlemen, we join in requesting you would be so good as to cause lodgings to be provided for us, and a sloop engaged to carry us to Albany. There are five of us, and we propose staying in New York two nights at least. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Journey to Canada. — Proceedings of Congress.

Saratoga, 15 April, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I am here on my way to Canada, detained by the present state of the Lakes, in which the unthawed ice obstructs navigation. I begin to apprehend that I have undertaken a fatigue, that, at my time of life, may prove

* Brigadier General in the American army, and stationed at New York, where, for a short time, he had the chief command after the departure of General Lee. See *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III. p. 318.

too much for me; so I sit down to write to a few friends by way of farewell.

I congratulate you on the departure of your late troublesome neighbours. I hope your country will now for some time have rest, and that care will be taken so to fortify Boston, as that no force shall be able again to get footing there. Your very kind letter of November 13th, enclosing Lord Chatham's and Lord Camden's speeches, I duly received. I think no one can be more sensible than I am of the favors of corresponding friends, but I find it impossible to answer as I ought. At present I think you will deem me inexcusable, and therefore I will not attempt an apology. But if you should ever happen to be at the same time oppressed with years and business, you may then extenuate a little for your old friend.

The notes of the speeches taken by your son, whose loss I shall ever deplore with you, are exceedingly valuable, as being by much the best account preserved of that day's debate.*

You ask, "When is the Continental Congress by *general consent* to be formed into a supreme legislature; alliances, defensive and offensive, formed; our ports opened; and a formidable naval force established at the public charge?" I can only answer at present, that nothing seems wanting but that "general consent." The novelty of the thing deters some, the doubt of success, others, the vain hope of reconciliation, many. But our enemies take continually every proper measure to remove these obstacles, and their endeavours are attended with success, since every day furnishes us with new causes of increasing enmity, and new reasons

* Notes of Speeches made by Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, and others, in the British House of Lords, January 20th, 1775. See *Life of Josiah Quincy, Junior*, pp. 318, 335.

for wishing an eternal separation; so that there is a rapid increase of the formerly small party, who were for an independent government.

Your epigram on Lord Chatham's remark has amply repaid me for the song. Accept my thanks for it, and for the charming extract of a lady's letter, contained in your favor of January 22d. I thought, when I sat down, to have written by this opportunity to Dr. Cooper, Mr. Bowdoin, and Dr. Winthrop, but I am interrupted. Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to them, and to your family. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER.

Journey from Albany to New York.

New York, 27 May, 1776.

DEAR GENERAL,

We arrived here safe yesterday evening, in your postchaise driven by Lewis. I was unwilling to give so much trouble, and would have borrowed your sulkey, and driven myself; but good Mrs. Schuyler insisted on a full compliance with your pleasure, as signified in your letter, and I was obliged to submit, which I was afterwards very glad of, part of the road being very stony and much gullied, where I should, probably, have overset and broken my own bones, all the skill and dexterity of Lewis being no more than sufficient. Through the influence of your kind recommendation to the innkeepers on the road, we found a great readiness to supply us with a change of horses. Accept our thankful acknowledgments; they are all we can at present make.

We congratulate you on the very valuable prize made at Boston. They threaten us with a mighty force from England and Germany. I trust that, before the end of the campaign, its inefficacy will be apparent to all the world, our enemies become sick of their projects, and the freedom of America be established on the surest foundation, its own ability to defend it. May God bless, and preserve you, for all our sakes as well as for that of your dear family. Mr. Carroll joins me in every hearty wish for prosperity and felicity to you and yours. With the highest esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE COMMISSIONERS IN CANADA.*

Prize carried into Boston. — German Auxiliaries. — New Governments advised by Congress. — His ill Health.

New York, 21 May, 1776.

DEAR FRIENDS,

We arrived here safe yesterday evening, having left Mrs. Walker with her husband at Albany, from whence we came down by land. We passed him on Lake Champlain; but he returning overtook us at Saratoga, where they both took such liberties, in taunting at our conduct in Canada, that it came almost to a quarrel. We continued our care of her, however, and landed her safe in Albany with her three wagon loads of baggage, brought thither without putting her to any expense, and parted civilly, though coldly. I think

* Dr. Franklin's ill state of health compelled him to leave Canada before the other Commissioners, and he returned in company with the Reverend Mr. Carroll.

they both have an excellent talent at making themselves enemies, and, I believe, live where they will, they will never be long without them.

We met yesterday two officers from Philadelphia, with a letter from the Congress to the Commissioners, and a sum of hard money. I opened the letter, and sealed it again, directing them to carry it forward to you. I congratulate you on the great prize carried into Boston. Seventy-five tons of gunpowder are an excellent supply, and the thousand carbines with bayonets, another fine article. The German auxiliaries are certainly coming. It is our business to prevent their returning. The Congress have advised the erecting new governments, which has occasioned some dissension in Philadelphia, but I hope it will soon be composed.*

I shall be glad to hear of your welfare As to myself, I find I grow daily more feeble, and think I could hardly have got along so far, but for Mr. Carroll's friendly assistance and tender care of me. Some symptoms of the gout now appear, which makes me think my indisposition has been a smothered fit of that disorder, which my constitution wanted strength to form completely. I have had several fits of it formerly.

God bless you and prosper your counsels, and bring you safe again to your friends and families. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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* It was resolved in Congress, "That it be recommended to the respective Assemblies and Conventions of the United Colonies, where no government sufficient for the exigencies of their affairs has been hitherto established, to adopt such form of government as shall, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular and America in general."—*Journals, May 10th.*

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

Contrivance for destroying the Enemy's Ships.

Philadelphia, 22 July, 1776.

SIR,

The bearer, Mr. Joseph Belton, some time since petitioned the Congress for encouragement to destroy the enemy's ships of war by some contrivances of his invention. They came to no resolution on his petition; and, as they appear to have no great opinion of such proposals, it is not easy, in the multiplicity of business before them, to get them to bestow any part of their attention on his request. He is now desirous of trying his hand on the ships that are gone up the North River; and, as he proposes to work entirely at his own expease, and only desires your countenance and permission, I could not refuse his desire of a line of introduction to you, the trouble of which I beg you to excuse. As he appears to be a very ingenious man, I hope his project may be attended with success. With the sincerest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO HORATIO GATES.

Resolves of Congress for distributing Papers among the Hessian Troops. — Prizes taken at Sea. — Dr. Price's Pamphlet. — Advices from England.

Philadelphia, 28 August, 1776

DEAR SIR,

The Congress being advised, that there was a probability that the Hessians might be induced to quit

the British service by offers of land, came to two resolves for this purpose, which, being translated into German and printed, are sent to Staten Island to be distributed, if practicable, among those people. Some of them have tobacco marks on the back, that so tobacco being put up in them in small quantities, as the tobacconists use, and suffered to fall into the hands of these people, they might divide the papers as plunder, before their officers could come to the knowledge of the contents, and prevent their being read by the men. That was the first resolve. A second has since been made for the officers themselves. I am desired to send some of both sorts to you, that, if you find it practicable, you may convey them among the Germans that shall come against you.

The Congress continue firmly united, and we begin to distress the enemy's trade very much; many valuable prizes being continually brought in. Arms and ammunition are also continually arriving, the French having resolved to permit the exportation to us, as they heartily wish us success; so that in another year we shall be well provided.

As you may not have seen Dr. Price's excellent pamphlet, for writing which the city of London presented him a freedom in a gold box of fifty pounds' value, I send you one of them.

My last advices from England say, that the ministry have done their utmost in fitting out this armament: and that, if it fails, they cannot find means next year to go on with the war. While I am writing comes an account, that the armies were engaged on Long Island, the event unknown, which throws us into anxious suspense. God grant success. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO LORD HOWE.

Concerning an Interview requested by his Lordship.

Philadelphia, 8 September, 1776.

My Lord,

I received your favor of the 16th past. I did not immediately answer it, because I found that my corresponding with your Lordship was disliked by some members of Congress. I hope now soon to have an opportunity of discussing with you, *vivâ voce*, the matters mentioned in it; as I am, with Mr. Adams and Mr. Rutledge, appointed to wait on your Lordship, in consequence of a desire you expressed in some conversation with General Sullivan, and of a resolution of Congress made thereupon, which that gentleman has probably before this time communicated to you.

We propose to set out on our journey to-morrow morning, and to be at Amboy on Wednesday about nine o'clock, where we should be glad to meet a line from your Lordship, appointing the time and place of meeting. If it would be agreeable to your Lordship, we apprehend, that, either at the house on Staten Island opposite to Amboy, or at the governor's house in Amboy, we might be accommodated with a room for the purpose. With the greatest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, my Lord, &c.

B. Franklin.*

* For Lord Howe's answer to this letter, and other particulars relating to the interview with him, see Vol V. pp. 97 - 108.

TO PHILIP MAZZEI.

Academy of Turin. — Culture of Silk in America. — Seeds of a Plant from Italy.

Philadelphia. [Date uncertain.] *

DEAR SIR,

It was with great pleasure, that I learned from Mr. Jefferson that you were settled in America; and, from the letter you favored me with, that you liked the country, and have reason to expect success in your laudable and meritorious endeavours to introduce new products. I heartily wish you all the success you can desire in that, and every other laudable undertaking, that may conduce to your comfortable establishment in your present situation. I know not how it has happened, that you have not received an answer from the secretary of our Society. I suppose they must have written, and that it has miscarried. If you have not yet sent the books, which the Academy of Turin have done us the honor to present us with, we must, I fear, wait for more quiet times before we can have the pleasure of receiving them, the communication being now very difficult.

All America is obliged to the Grand Duke for his benevolence to it, and for the protection he afforded you, and his encouragement of your undertaking. We have experienced, that silk may be produced to great advantage. While in London, I had some trunks full sent to me from hence, three years successively; and it sold by auction for nineteen shillings and sixpence the

* This letter is reprinted from the PORT FOLIO (Vol. IV. p. 94). It is there dated "Philadelphia, December 3d, 1775." The mention of the Declaration of Independence in the letter proves this date to be wrong. It was probably written a short time before Dr. Franklin's departure for France.

small pound, which was not much below the silk of Italy.

The Congress have not yet extended their views much towards foreign powers. They are nevertheless obliged by your kind offers of your service, which perhaps in a year or two more may become very useful to them. I am myself much pleased, that you have sent a translation of our Declaration of Independence to the Grand Duke; because, having a high esteem for the character of that prince, and of the whole imperial family, from the accounts given me of them by my friend, Dr. Ingenhousz, and yourself, I should be happy to find, that we stood well in the opinion of that court.

Mr. Tromond of Milan, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted in London, spoke to me of a plant much used in Italy, and which he thought might be useful in America. He promised, at my request, to find me some of the seeds, which he has accordingly done. I have unfortunately forgotten the use, and know nothing of the culture. In both these particulars I must beg information and advice from you. It is called *ravizzoni*. I send specimens of the seed enclosed. I received from the same Mr. Tromond four copies of a translation of some of my pieces into the fine language of your native country. I beg your acceptance of one of them, and of my best wishes for your health and prosperity. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.*

Announces his Arrival in France. — Does not assume a public Character. — Military Stores destined for America.

Nantes, 8 December, 1776.

SIR,

In thirty days after we left the Capes of Delaware, we came to an anchor in Quiberon Bay. I remained on board four days, expecting a change of wind proper to carry the ship into the river Loire; but the wind seemed fixed in an opposite quarter. I landed at Aury, and with some difficulty got hither, the road not being well supplied with means of conveyance. Two days before we saw land, we met a brigantine from Bordeaux belonging to Cork, and another from Rochefort

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* In March, 1776, Mr. Deane, lately a member of Congress, was sent to France by the Committee of Secret Correspondence, and authorized to act as a political and commercial agent for the United States. On the 26th of September, three Commissioners were appointed by Congress to take charge of the American affairs in Europe, and endeavour to procure a treaty of alliance with the court of France. These commissioners were Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thomas Jefferson. The appointment being declined by Mr. Jefferson, his place was supplied by Arthur Lee, on the 22d of October. Mr. Lee was then in London, and Mr. Deane in Paris. Dr. Franklin sailed from Philadelphia on the 26th of October, and the vessel entered Quiberon Bay, November 29th. He proceeded thence by way of Nantes to Paris, where he arrived about the 20th of December, and where he found Mr. Deane. They were joined by Mr. Lee the day after Dr. Franklin's arrival.

This commission continued till September 14th, 1778, when it was dissolved by Congress, and Dr. Franklin was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at the court of France. Many of the official letters, relating to his public transactions during the first two years of his residence in France, were signed jointly by the three Commissioners. As it is not known which of these letters were written by Dr. Franklin, no part of them is introduced into this work. They may all be seen in the first and second volumes of the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution.*

belonging to Hull, both of which were taken. The first had on board staves, tar, turpentine, and claret; the other cognac brandy and flaxseed. There is some difficulty in determining what to do with them; as they are scarce worth sending to America, and the mind of the French court, with regard to prizes brought into their ports, is not yet known. It is certainly contrary to their treaties with Britain to permit the sale of them, and we have no regular means of trying and condemning them. There are, however, many here, who would purchase prizes; we having already had several offers from persons who are willing to take upon themselves all consequences as to the illegality. Captain Wickes, as soon as he can get his refreshment, intends to cruise in the Channel.

Our friends in France have been a good deal dejected with the Gazette accounts of advantages obtained against us by the British troops. I have helped them here to recover their spirits a little, by assuring them, that we still face the enemy, and were under no apprehension of their armies being able to complete their junction. I understand that Mr. Lee has lately been at Paris, that Mr. Deane is still there, and that an underhand supply is obtained from the government of two hundred brass fieldpieces, thirty thousand firelocks, and some other military stores, which are now shipping for America, and will be convoyed by a ship of war. The court of England (M. Penet tells me, from whom I have the above intelligence,) had the folly to demand Mr. Deane to be delivered up, but were refused.

Our voyage, though not long, was rough, and I feel myself weakened by it; but I now recover strength daily, and in a few days shall be able to undertake the journey to Paris. I have not yet taken any pub-

lic character, thinking it prudent first to know whether the court is ready and willing to receive ministers publicly from the Congress; that we may neither embarrass it on the one hand, nor subject ourselves to the nazard of a disgraceful refusal on the other. I have despatched an express to Mr. Deane, with the letters that I had for him from the Committee, and a copy of our commission, that he may immediately make the proper inquiries, and give me information. In the mean time I find it generally supposed here, that I am sent to negotiate; and that opinion appears to give great pleasure, if I can judge by the extreme civilities I meet with from numbers of the principal people, who have done me the honor to visit me.

I have desired Mr. Deane, by some speedy and safe means, to give Mr. Lee notice of his appointment. I find several vessels here laden with military stores for America, just ready to sail. On the whole, there is the greatest prospect that we shall be well provided for another campaign, and much stronger than we were last. A Spanish fleet has sailed with seven thousand land forces foot, and some horse. Their destination is unknown, but supposed against the Portuguese in Brazil. Both France and England are preparing strong fleets, and it is said, that all the powers of Europe are preparing for war, apprehending that a general one cannot be very far distant. When I arrive at Paris, I shall be able to write with more certainty. I beg you to present my duty to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful endeavours in their service. With the sincerest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

Nantes, 8 December, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

After a short but rough passage of thirty days, we anchored in Quiberon Bay, the wind not suiting to enter the Loire. Captain Wickes did every thing in his power to make the voyage comfortable to me; and I was much pleased with what I saw of his conduct as an officer, when on supposed occasions we made preparation for engagement, the good order and readiness, with which it was done, being far beyond my expectations, and I believe equal to any thing of the kind in the best ships of the King's fleet. He seems to have also a very good set of officers under him. I hope they will all in good time be promoted. He met and took two prizes, brigantines, one belonging to Cork, laden with staves, pitch, tar, turpentine, and claret; the other to Hull, with a cargo of flaxseed and brandy. The captains have made some propositions of ransom, which, perhaps, may be accepted, as there is yet no means of condemning them here, and they are scarce worth sending to America. The ship is yet in Quiberon Bay, with her prizes. I came hither from thence, seventy miles, by land. I am made extremely welcome here, where America has many friends. As soon as I have recovered strength enough for the journey, which I hope will be in a very few days, I shall set out for Paris. My letter to the President will inform you of some other particulars. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *December* 10*th.* I have just learned that eighty pieces of cannon, all brass, with carriages, braces,

and every thing fit for immediate service, were embarked in a frigate from Havre, which is sailed; the rest were to go in another frigate of thirty-six guns.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

Paris, 4 January, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

I arrived here about two weeks since, where I found Mr. Deane. Mr. Lee has since joined us from London. We have had an audience of the minister, Count de Vergennes, and were respectfully received. We left for his consideration a sketch of the proposed treaty.* We are to wait upon him to-morrow with a strong memorial, requesting the aids mentioned in our instructions. By his advice, we have had an interview with the Spanish ambassador, Count d'Aranda, who seems well disposed towards us, and will forward copies of our memorials to his court, which will act, he says, in perfect concert with this.

Their fleets are said to be in fine order, manned and fit for sea. The cry of this nation is for us, but the court, it is thought, views an approaching war with reluctance. The press continues in England. As soon as we can receive a positive answer from these courts, we shall despatch an express with it. I am, gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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* See this sketch in the Secret Journals of Congress, Vol. II. p 7

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Paris, 12 January, 1777.

My dear, dear Polly,

Figure to yourself an old man, with gray hair appearing under a martin fur cap, among the powdered heads of Paris. It is this odd figure that salutes you, with handfulls of blessings on you and your dear little ones.

On my arrival here, Mademoiselle Biheron gave me great pleasure in the perusal of a letter from you to her. It acquainted me that you and yours were well in August last. I have with me here my young grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, a special good boy. I shall give him a little French language and address, and then send him over to pay his respects to Miss Hewson. My love to all that love you, particularly to dear Dolly. I am ever, my dear friend, your affectionate B. Franklin.

P. S. Temple, who attends me here, presents his respects. I must contrive to get you to America. I want all my friends out of that wicked country. I have just seen in the paper seven paragraphs about me, of which six were lies.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 20 January, 1777.

Dear Sir,

The bearer, Captain Balm, is strongly recommended to me as a very able officer of horse, and capable of being extremely useful to us, in forming a body of men for that service. As he has otherwise an excellent character, I take the liberty of recommending him

to my friends as a stranger of merit, worthy of their civilities, and to the Congress as an officer, who, if employed, may greatly serve a cause, which he has sincerely at heart. With great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Paris, 26 January, 1777.

DEAR POLLY,

I wrote a few lines to you by Dr. B——, and have since seen your letter to Jonathan, by which I have the great pleasure of learning, that you and yours were well on the 17th.

What has become of my and your dear Dolly? Have you parted? for you mention nothing of her. I know your friendship continues; but perhaps she is with one of her brothers. How do they all do?

I have not yet received a line from my dear old friend, your mother. Pray tell me where she is, and how it is with her. Jonathan, who is now at Nantes, told me that she had a lodging in Northumberland Court. I doubt her being comfortably accommodated there. Is Miss Barwell a little more at rest, or as busy as ever? Is she well? And how fares it with our good friends of the Henckell family?

But, principally, I want to know how it is with you. I hear you have not quite settled yet with those people. I hope, however, that you have a sufficient income, and live at your ease, and that your money is safe out of the funds. Does my godson remember any thing of his Doctor papa? I suppose not. Kiss the dear little fellow for me; not forgetting the others. I long to see them and you. What became of the lottery ticket I left with your good mother, which was

to produce the diamond ear-rings for you? Did you get them? If not, Fortune has wronged you, for you *ought* to have had them. I am, my dear friend, ever yours with sincere esteem and affection,

B. Franklin.

P. S. *January* 27*th.* They tell me, that, in writing to a lady from Paris, one should always say something about the fashions. Temple observes them more than I do. He took notice, that at the ball in Nantes, there were no heads less than five and a few were seven lengths of the face, above the top of the forehead. You know that those who have practised drawing, as he has, attend more to proportions, than people in common do. Yesterday we dined at the Duke de Rochefoucauld's, where there were three duchesses and a countess, and no head higher than a face and a half. So, it seems, the farther from court, the more extravagant the mode.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

Philosopher's Stone. — State of Affairs in America.

Paris, 27 January, 1777.

Dear Sir,

I received your very kind letter of February last, some time in September. Major Carleton, who was so kind as to forward it to me, had not an opportunity of doing it sooner. I rejoice to hear of your continual progress in those useful discoveries; I find that you have set all the philosophers of Europe at work upon *fixed air;* and it is with great pleasure I observe how high you stand in their opinion; for I enjoy my friends' fame as my own.

The hint you gave me jocularly, that you did not quite despair of the *philosopher's stone*, draws from me a request, that, when you have found it, you will take care to lose it again; for I believe in my conscience, that mankind are wicked enough to continue slaughtering one another as long as they can find money to pay the butchers. But, of all the wars in my time, this on the part of England appears to me the wickedest; having no cause but malice against liberty, and the jealousy of commerce. And I think the crime seems likely to meet with its proper punishment; a total loss of her own liberty, and the destruction of her own commerce.

I suppose you would like to know something of the state of affairs in America. In all probability we shall be much stronger the next campaign than we were in the last; better armed, better disciplined, and with more ammunition. When I was at the camp before Boston,* the army had not five rounds of powder a man. This was kept a secret even from our people. The world wondered that we so seldom fired a cannon; we could not afford it; but we now make powder in plenty.

To me it seems, as it has always done, that this war must end in our favor, and in the ruin of Britain, if she does not speedily put an end to it. An English gentleman here the other day, in company with some French, remarked, that it was folly in France not to make war immediately; *And in England*, replied one of them, *not to make peace.*

Do not believe the reports you hear of our internal divisions. We are, I believe, as much united as any people ever were, and as firmly.

B. FRANKLIN.

* In October, 1775. See above, p. 160.

FROM WILLIAM DODD TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 29 January, 1777.

Sir,

I make no apology for troubling you with a request I have heretofore made of conveying the enclosed letter, if possible, to a worthy young woman, who, in an unfortunate hour, went to America, and to whose fortunes and situation there I am a stranger.

Anxious for the success of the grand struggle, in which you are engaged, I could have been happy in conversing with you when I was at Paris, but you were rather reserved. If you should see or converse with Mr. Mante, who resides at Dieppe, but is frequently at Paris, he knows my sentiments, and would be happy to communicate with you.* I am, with very great esteem, &c.

W. Dodd.

P. S. Is it not possible to effect a reconciliation? Happy could I be to be any way instrumental in it.

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* Thomas Mante was the author of "The History of the Late War in North America, and the Islands of the West Indies, including the Campaigns of 1763 and 1764 against his Majesty's Indian Enemies;" being a quarto volume published at London in 1772. It is the best history of the war which has been written. The author served in America; and, in the campaign against the Indians, in 1764, he acted as major of a brigade and aid-de-camp to General Bradstreet. After he published his History, he engaged in extensive agricultural operations in France, where he fell into pecuniary difficulties, as he says, by the faithless conduct of a person with whom he was associated. He was imprisoned in Paris for debt. In this condition, debilitated by disease and oppressed with want, he applied to Dr. Franklin for assistance. His creditors kept him long confined, during which time Dr. Franklin extended to him every friendly aid in his power, and generously supplied his necessities.

It was but six days after writing the above letter, that Dr. Dodd

TO MRS. THOMPSON, AT LISLE.

Paris, 8 February, 1777.

You are too early, *hussy*, as well as too saucy, in calling me *rebel;* you should wait for the event, which will determine whether it is a *rebellion* or only a *revolution.* Here the ladies are more civil; they call us *les insurgens*, a character that usually pleases them: and methinks all other women who smart, or have smarted, under the tyranny of a bad husband, ought to be fixed in *revolution* principles, and act accordingly.

In my way to Canada last spring, I saw dear Mrs. Barrow at New York. Mr. Barrow had been from her two or three months to keep Governor Tryon and other Tories company on board the Asia, one of the King's ships which lay in the harbour; and in all that time that naughty man had not ventured once on shore to see her. Our troops were then pouring into the town, and she was packing up to leave it, fearing, as she had a large house, they would incommode her by quartering officers in it. As she appeared in great perplexity, scarce knowing where to go, I persuaded her to stay; and I went to the general officers then commanding there, and recommended her to their protection; which they promised and performed. On my return from Canada, where I was a piece of a governor (and I think a very good one) for a fortnight, and might have been so till this time if your wicked army, enemies to all good government, had not come and driven me out, I found her still in quiet possession of her house. I inquired how our people had

signed the bond, which he had forged as from Lord Chesterfield, and which proved his ruin. He was convicted on the 24th of February and executed in June following.

behaved to her. She spoke in high terms of the respectful attention they had paid her, and the quiet and security they had procured her. I said I was glad of it; and that, if they had used her ill, I would have turned Tory. Then said she, with that pleasing gayety so natural to her, *I wish they had.* For you must know she is a *Toryess* as well as you, and can as flippantly call *rebel.* I drank tea with her; we talked affectionately of you and our other friends the Wilkeses, of whom she had received no late intelligence. What became of her since, I have not heard. The street she lived in was some months after chiefly burnt down; but, as the town was then, and ever since has been, in possession of the King's troops, I have had no opportunity of knowing whether she suffered any loss in the conflagration. I hope she did not, as, if she did, I should wish I had not persuaded her to stay there.

I am glad to learn from you, that that unhappy, though deserving family, the W——s, are getting into some business, that may afford them subsistence. I pray, that God will bless them, and that they may see happier days. Mr. Cheap's and Dr. H——'s good fortunes please me. Pray learn, if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other people's pleasures, and happy with their happiness, when none occur of your own; and then perhaps you will not so soon be weary of the place you chance to be in, and so fond of rambling to get rid of your *ennui.* I fancy you have hit upon the right reason of your being weary of St. Omer's, viz. that you are out of temper, which is the effect of full living and idleness. A month in Bridewell, beating hemp, upon bread and water, would give you health and spirits, and subsequent cheerfulness and contentment with every other situation. I prescribe that regimen for you, my dear, in pure good

will, without a fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the price of living in either of those places; but I am sure a single woman, as you are, might with economy upon two hundred pounds a year maintain herself comfortably anywhere, and me into the bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for, being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse.

Present my respects to Mrs. Payne and Mrs. Heathcot; for, though I have not the honor of knowing them, yet, as you say they are friends to the American cause, I am sure they must be women of good understanding. I know you wish you could see me; but, as you cannot, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin gray straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap, which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear among the powdered heads of Paris! I wish every lady and gentleman in France would only be so obliging as to follow my fashion, comb their own heads as I do mine, dismiss their *friseurs*, and pay me half the money they paid to them. You see, the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist these *friseurs*, who are at least one hundred thousand, and with the money I would maintain them, make a visit with them to England, and dress the heads of your ministers and privy counsellors; which I conceive at present to be *un peu dérangées*. Adieu, madcap; and believe me ever, your affectionate friend and humble servant,

B. Franklin.

P. S. Don't be proud of this long letter. A fit of the gout, which has confined me five days, and made me refuse to see company, has given me a little time to trifle; otherwise it would have been very short, visitors and business would have interrupted; and perhaps, with Mrs. Barrow, you wish they had.

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ.

Purposes for which Dr. Franklin was sent to France.

Paris. [Date uncertain.]

—— I long labored in England, with great zeal and sincerity, to prevent the breach that has happened, and which is now so wide, that no endeavours of mine can possibly heal it. You know the treatment I met with from that imprudent court; but I keep a separate account of private injuries, which I may forgive; and I do not think it right to mix them with public affairs. Indeed, there is no occasion for their aid to whet my resentment against a nation, that has burnt our defenceless towns in the midst of winter, has excited the savages to assassinate our innocent farmers, with their wives and children, and our slaves to murder their masters!

It would therefore be deceiving you, if I suffered you to remain in the supposition you have taken up, that I am come to Europe to make peace. I am in fact ordered hither by the Congress for a very different purpose; viz. to procure those aids from European powers, for enabling us to defend our freedom and independence, which it is certainly their interest to grant; as by that means the great and rapidly growing trade of America will be open to them all, and

not a monopoly to Great Britain, as heretofore; a monopoly, that, if she is suffered again to possess, will be such an increase of her strength by sea, and if she can reduce us again to submission, she will have thereby so great an addition to her strength by land, as will, together, make her the most formidable power the world has yet seen; and, from her natural pride and insolence in prosperity, of all others the most intolerable.

You desire to know my opinion of what will probably be the end of this war; and whether our new establishments will not be thereby reduced again to deserts. I do not, for my part, apprehend much danger of so great an evil to us. I think we shall be able, with a little help, to defend ourselves, our possessions, and our liberties so long, that England will be ruined by persisting in the wicked attempt to destroy them. I must nevertheless regret that ruin, and wish that her injustice and tyranny had not deserved it. And I sometimes flatter myself, that, old as I am, I may possibly live to see my country settled in peace and prosperity, when Britain shall make no more a formidable figure among the powers of Europe.

You put me in mind of an apology for my conduct, which has been expected from me, in answer to the abuses thrown upon me before the Privy Council. It was partly written, but the affairs of public importance I have ever since been engaged in prevented my finishing it.* The injuries, too, that my country has suffered, have absorbed private resentments, and made it appear trifling for an individual to trouble the world with his particular justification, when all his compatriots were stigmatized by the King and Parliament

* See the piece here mentioned, Vol. IV. p. 405.

as being, in every respect, *the worst of mankind!* I am obliged to you, however, for the friendly part you have always taken in the defence of my character; and it is indeed no small argument in my favor, that those, who have known me most and longest, still love me and trust me with their most important interests, of which my election into the Congress by the unanimous voice of the Assembly, or Parliament of Pennsylvania, the day after my arrival from England, and my present mission hither by the Congress itself, are instances incontestable. ——

TO ARTHUR LEE.*

Commission to treat with Spain. — Loans. — Sir Joseph Yorke's Memorial. — Holland. — Amsterdam.

Passy, 21 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

We have received your favors from Vitoria and Burgos. The Congress, sitting at Baltimore, despatched a packet to us the 9th of January, containing an account of the success at Trenton, and subsequent events to that date, as far as they had come to knowledge. The vessel was obliged to run up a little river in Virginia to avoid some men-of-war, and was

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* In a letter from the Commissioners to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, dated at Paris, February 6th, they write as follows. "Finding that our residence here together is nearly as expensive as if separate, and *having reason to believe*, that one of us might be useful in Madrid, and another in Holland, and some courts further northward, we have agreed that Mr. Lee go to Spain, and either Mr. Deane or Dr Franklin to the Hague. Mr. Lee sets out to-morrow, having obtained passports, and a letter from the Spanish ambassador here to the minister there. The journey to Holland will not take place so soon. The particular purposes of these journeys we cannot prudently now explain."

Mr. Lee accordingly went to Spain; but he was not permitted by the Spanish court to proceed any farther than Burgos. He was there met

detained there seventeen days, or we should have had these advices sooner. We learn however through England, where they have news from New York to the 4th of February, that in Lord Cornwallis's retreat to New Brunswic two regiments of his rear guard were cut to pieces; that, General Washington having got round him to Newark and Elizabethtown, he had retired to Amboy in his way to New York; that General Howe had called in the garrisons of Fort Lee and Fort Constitution, which were now possessed by our people; that, on the New York side, Forts Washington and Independence were retaken by our troops, and that the British forces at Rhode Island were recalled for the defence of New York.

The Committee in their letters mention the intention of Congress to send ministers to the courts of Vienna, Tuscany, Holland, and Prussia. They also send us a fresh commission, containing your name instead of Mr. Jefferson's, with this additional clause, "and also to enter into, and agree upon a treaty with His Most Christian Majesty, or such other person or persons as shall be by him authorized for that purpose, for assistance in carrying on the present war between Great Britain and these United States." The same clause is in a particular commission they have sent me, to treat with the court of Spain, similar to our common commission to the court of France;* and I am accord-

by the Marquis de Grimaldi, one of the ministers, and succeeded in obtaining from the Spanish government a small amount of money for purchasing military supplies, which were subsequently shipped to the United States from Bilboa. The business was transacted secretly, and the minister declined making any pledges, or entering into any arrangements, in favor of the United States. Mr. Lee returned to Paris, and rejoined the other Commissioners, after an absence of seven weeks. — See *North American Review*, for April, 1830, Vol. XXX. p. 470.

* On the 1st of January, 1777, Congress resolved, "That Benjamin Franklin be directed to proceed to the court of Spain, and there trans-

ingly directed to go to Spain; but, as I know that choice was made merely on the supposition of my being a little known there to the great personage for whom you have my letter, (a circumstance of little importance), and I am really unable through age to bear the fatigue and inconveniences of such a journey, I must excuse myself to Congress, and join with Mr. Deane in requesting you to proceed in the business on the former footing, till you can receive a particular commission from Congress, which will no doubt be sent as soon as the circumstances are known.

We know of no plans or instructions to Mr. Deane but those you have with you. By the packet, indeed, we have some fresh instructions, which relate to your mission, viz. that, in case France and Spain will enter into the war, the United States will assist the former in the conquest of the British sugar islands, and the latter in the conquest of Portugal, promising the assistance of six frigates manned, of not less than twenty-four guns each, and provisions equal to two millions of dollars; America desiring only for her share, what Britain holds on the continent; but you shall by the first safe opportunity have the instructions at length. I believe we must send a courier.

If we can, we are ordered to borrow two millions of pounds on interest. Judge then what a piece of service you will do, if you can obtain a considerable subsidy, or even a loan without interest.

We are also ordered to build six ships of war. It is a pleasure to find the things ordered, which we were doing without orders.

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act, in behalf of the United States, such business as shall be intrusted to him by Congress, agreeably to the instructions, that may be given to him, and transmitted by the Committee of Secret Correspondence." See his Commission in the *Secret Journal of Congress*, Vol. II. p. 42.

We are also to acquaint the several courts with the determination of America to maintain at all events our independence. You will see, by the date of the resolution relating to Portugal, as well as by the above, that the Congress were stout in the midst of their difficulties. It would be well to sound the court of Spain on the subject of permitting our armed ships to bring prizes into her ports, and there dispose of them. If it can be done openly, in what manner can we be accommodated with the use of their ports, or under what restrictions? This government has of late been a little nice on that head; and the orders to L'Orient have occasioned Captain Wickes some trouble.

We have good advice of our friend at Amsterdam, that, in the height of British pride on their summer success, and just before they heard of any check, the ambassador, Sir Joseph Yorke, had been ordered to send a haughty memorial to the States, importing that, notwithstanding their promises to restrain their subjects from supplying the rebels, it was notorious, that those supplies were openly furnished by Hollanders at St. Eustatia; and that the governor of that island had returned, *from his fort, the salute of a rebel ship of war with an equal number of guns;* that his Majesty justly and highly resented these proceedings, and demanded that the States should by more severe provisions restrain that commerce; that they should declare their disapprobation of the insolent behaviour of their governor, and punish him by an immediate recall; otherwise his Majesty, who knows what appertains to the dignity of his crown, would take proper measures to vindicate it; and he required an immediate answer. The States coolly returned the memorial, with only this answer, that, when the respect due to sovereigns was not preserved in a memorial,

it ought not to be expected in an answer. But the city of Amsterdam took fire at the insolence of it, and instructed their deputies in the States to demand satisfaction by the British court's disavowal of the memorial, and the reprimand of the ambassador. The States immediately demanded a number of men-of-war ships to be in readiness. Perhaps since the bad news has come, England may be civil enough to make up this little difference.

Mr. Deane is still here. You desire our advice about your stopping at Burgos. We are of opinion, that you should comply with the request. While we are asking aid, it is necessary to gratify the desires, and in some sort comply with the humors, of those we apply to. Our business now is to carry our point. But I have never yet changed the opinion I gave in Congress, that a virgin State should preserve the virgin character, and not go about suitoring for alliances, but wait with decent dignity for the applications of others. I was overruled; perhaps for the best.

With the greatest esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO M. LITH.

Obtrusive Applications.

Passy 6 April, 1777.

SIR,

I have just been honored with a letter from you, dated the 26th past, in which you express yourself

* Passy, the place at which the above letter is dated, is a small town about three miles from Paris, on the banks of the Seine. Dr. Franklin lived there during the whole of his residence in France.

as astonished, and appear to be angry, that you have no answer to a letter you wrote me on the 11th of December, which you are sure was delivered to me.

In exculpation of myself, I assure you that I never received any letter from you of that date. And indeed, being then but four days landed at Nantes, I think you could scarce have heard so soon of my being in Europe.

But I received one from you of the 8th of January, which I own I did not answer. It may displease you, if I give you the reason; but, as it may be of use to you in your future correspondences, I will hazard that for a gentleman to whom I feel myself obliged, as an American, on account of his good will to our cause.

Whoever writes to a stranger should observe three points. 1. That what he proposes be practicable. 2. His propositions should be made in explicit terms, so as to be easily understood. 3. What he desires should be in itself reasonable. Hereby he will give a favorable impression of his understanding, and create a desire of further acquaintance. Now it happened that you were negligent in *all* these points; for, first, you desired to have means procured for you of taking a voyage to America "*avec sureté*"; which is not possible, as the dangers of the sea subsist always, and at present there is the additional danger of being taken by the English. Then you desire that this may be "*sans trop grandes dépenses*," which is not intelligible enough to be answered, because, not knowing your ability of bearing expenses, one cannot judge what may be *trop grandes*. Lastly, you desire letters of address to the Congress and to General Washington; which it is not reasonable to ask of one who knows no more of you, than that your name is Lith, and that you live at Bayreuth.

In your last you also express yourself in vague terms, when you desire to be informed whether you may expect "*d'être reçu d'une manière convenable*" in our troops. As it is impossible to know what your ideas are of the *manière convenable*, how can one answer this? And then you demand, whether I will support you by my authority in giving you letters of recommendation. I doubt not your being a man of merit; and, knowing it yourself, you may forget that it is not known to everybody; but reflect a moment, Sir, and you will be convinced, that, if I were to practise giving letters of recommendation to persons of whose character I knew no more than I do of yours, my recommendations would soon be of no authority at all.

I thank you, however, for your kind desire of being serviceable to my countrymen; and I wish in return, that I could be of service to you in the scheme you have formed of going to America. But numbers of experienced officers here have offered to go over and join our army, and I could give them no encouragement, because I have no orders for that purpose, and I know it extremely difficult to place them when they arrive there. I cannot but think, therefore, that it is best for you not to make so long, so expensive, and so hazardous a voyage, but to take the advice of your friends, and "*stay in Franconia.*" I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO COUNT D'ARANDA, SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO THE COURT OF FRANCE.

Communicating the Propositions of the United States in Regard to Spain.

Passy, 7 April, 1777.

SIR,

I left in your Excellency's hands, to be communicated, if you please, to your court, a duplicate of the commission from Congress, appointing me to go to Spain as their Minister Plenipotentiary. But, as I understand that the receiving such a minister is not at present thought convenient, and I am sure the Congress would have nothing done that might incommode in the least a court they so much respect, I shall therefore postpone that journey till circumstances may make it more suitable. In the mean time, I beg leave to lay before his Catholic Majesty, through the hands of your Excellency, the propositions contained in a resolution of Congress, dated December 30th, 1776, viz.

"That, if His Catholic Majesty will join with the United States in a war against Great Britain, they will assist in reducing to the possession of Spain the town and harbour of Pensacola; provided the inhabitants of the United States shall have the free navigation of the Mississippi, and the use of the harbour of Pensacola; and will, (provided it shall be true, that his Portuguese Majesty has insultingly expelled the vessels of these States from his ports, or has confiscated any such vessels,) declare war against the said King, if that measure shall be agreeable to, and supported by, the courts of France and Spain."

It is understood, that the strictest union subsists between those two courts; and, in case Spain and

France should think fit to attempt the conquest of the English sugar islands, Congress have further proposed to furnish provisions to the amount of two millions of dollars, and to join the fleet, employed on the occasion, with six frigates of not less than twenty-four guns each, manned and fitted for service; and to render any other assistance which may be in their power, as becomes good allies; without desiring for themselves the possession of any of the said islands.

These propositions are subject to discussion, and to receive such modification as may be found proper. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

The American Cause popular in Europe.

Paris, 1 May, 1777.

I thank you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival here, and for your good wishes. I am, as you supposed, treated with great civility and respect by all orders of people; but it gives me still greater satisfaction to find, that our being here is of some use to our country. On that head I cannot be more explicit at present.

I rejoice with you in the happy change of affairs in America last winter. I hope the same train of success will continue through the summer. Our enemies are disappointed in the number of additional troops they purposed to send over. What they have been able to muster will not probably recruit their army to the state it was in the beginning of last campaign; and ours I hope will be equally numerous, better armed, and better clothed, than they have been heretofore.

All Europe is on our side of the question, as far as applause and good wishes can carry them. Those who live under arbitrary power do nevertheless approve of liberty, and wish for it; they almost despair of recovering it in Europe; they read the translations of our separate colony constitutions with rapture; and there are such numbers everywhere, who talk of removing to America, with their families and fortunes, as soon as peace and our independence shall be established, that it is generally believed we shall have a prodigious addition of strength, wealth, and arts, from the emigrations of Europe; and it is thought, that, to lessen or prevent such emigrations, the tyrannies established there must relax, and allow more liberty to their people. Hence it is a common observation here, that our cause is *the cause of all mankind*, and that we are fighting for their liberty in defending our own. It is a glorious task assigned us by Providence; which has, I trust, given us spirit and virtue equal to it, and will at last crown it with success. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN WINTHROP.

Dr. Price. — Conduct of the German Princes in sending Troops to America.

Paris, 1 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of February 28th, which gave me great pleasure. I forwarded your letter to Dr. Price, who was well lately; but his friends, on his account, were under some apprehensions from the violence of government, in consequence of his late ex-

cellent publications in favor of liberty. I wish all the friends of liberty and of man would quit that sink of corruption, and leave it to its fate.

The people of this country are almost unanimously in our favor. The government has its reasons for postponing a war, but is making daily the most diligent preparations; wherein Spain goes hand in hand. In the mean time, America has the whole harvest of prizes made upon the British commerce; a kind of monopoly that has its advantages, as, by affording greater encouragement to our cruisers, it increases the number of our seamen, and thereby augments our naval power.

The conduct of those Princes of Germany, who have sold the blood of their people, has subjected them to the contempt and odium of all Europe. The Prince of Anspach, whose recruits mutinied and refused to march, was obliged to disarm and fetter them, and drive them to the seaside by the help of his guards; himself attending in person. In his return he was publicly hooted by mobs through every town he passed in Holland, with all sorts of reproachful epithets. The King of Prussia's humor of obliging those Princes to pay him the same toll per head for the men they drive through his dominions, as used to be paid him for their *cattle*, because they were sold as such, is generally spoken of with approbation, as containing a just reproof of those tyrants. I send you enclosed one of the many satires that have appeared on this occasion.

With best wishes of prosperity to yourself and to my dear country, where I hope to spend my last years, and lay my bones, I am ever, dear Sir, your affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Paris. 1 May, 1777.

SIR,

I thank you for your kind congratulations on my arrival here, and shall be happy in finding that our negotiations on this side of the water are of effectual service to our country.

The general news here is, that all Europe is arming and preparing for war, as if it were soon expected. Many of the powers, however, have their reasons for endeavouring to postpone it, at least a few months longer.

Our enemies will not be able to send against us all the strength they intended; they can procure but few Germans; and their recruiting and impressing at home goes on but heavily. They threaten, however, and give out, that Lord Howe is to bombard Boston this summer, and Burgoyne, with the troops from Canada, to destroy Providence, and lay waste Connecticut; while Howe marches against Philadelphia. They will do us undoubtedly as much mischief as they can; but the virtue and bravery of our countrymen will, with the blessing of God, prevent part of what they intend, and nobly bear the rest. This campaign is entered upon with a mixture of rage and despair, as their whole scheme of reducing us depends upon its success; the wisest of the nation being clear, that, if this fails, administration will not be able to support another.

B. FRANKLIN

TO A FRIEND.

Solicitations for military Appointments in America.

Passy, [date uncertain.]

You know, my dear friend, that I am not capable of refusing you any thing in my power, which would be a real kindness to you, or any friend of yours; but, when I am certain that what you request would be directly the contrary, I ought to refuse it. I know that officers going to America for employment will probably be disappointed; that our armies are full; that there are a number of expectants unemployed, and starving for want of subsistence; that my recommendation will not make vacancies, nor can it fill them, to the prejudice of those who have a better claim; that some of those officers I have been prevailed on to recommend have, by their conduct, given no favorable impression of my judgment in military merit; and then the voyage is long, the passage very expensive, and the hazard of being taken and imprisoned by the English very considerable. If, after all, no place can be found affording a livelihood for the gentleman in question, he will perhaps be distressed in a strange country, and ready to blaspheme his friends, who, by their solicitations, procured for him so unhappy a situation.

Permit me to mention to you, that, in my opinion, the natural complaisance of this country often carries people too far in the article of *recommendations*. You give them with too much facility to persons of whose real characters you know nothing, and sometimes at the request of others of whom you know as little. Frequently, if a man has no useful talents, is good

for nothing and burdensome to his relations, or is indiscreet, profligate, and extravagant, they are glad to get rid of him by sending him to the other end of the world; and for that purpose scruple not to recommend him to those they wish should recommend him to others, as "*un bon sujet, plein de mérite*," &c. &c. In consequence of my crediting such recommendations, my own are out of credit, and I cannot advise anybody to have the least dependence on them. If, after knowing this, you persist in desiring my recommendation for this person, who is known neither to *me* nor to *you*, I will give it, though, as I said before, I ought to refuse it.*

These applications are my perpetual torment. People will believe, notwithstanding my repeated declarations to the contrary, that I am sent hither to engage officers. In truth, I never had any such orders. It was never so much as intimated to me, that it would

* For cases of this kind, and where it was absolutely *impossible* to refuse, Dr. Franklin drew up the following as a model for such letters of recommendation, and actually employed it in some instances, to shame the persons making such indiscreet applications; and to endeavour, in some measure, to put a stop to them. — W. T. F.

"*Model of a Letter of Recommendation of a person you are unacquainted with.*

"Paris, 2 April, 1777.

"SIR,

"The bearer of this, who is going to America, presses me to give him a letter of recommendation, though I know nothing of him, not even his name. This may seem extraordinary, but I assure you it is not uncommon here. Sometimes, indeed, one unknown person brings another equally unknown, to recommend him; and sometimes they recommend one another! As to this gentleman, I must refer you to himself for his character and merits, with which he is certainly better acquainted than I can possibly be. I recommend him, however, to those civilities, which every stranger, of whom one knows no harm, has a right to; and I request you will do him all the good offices, and show him all the favor, that, on further acquaintance, you shall find him to deserve. I have the honor to be, &c."

be agreeable to my constituents. I have even received for what I have done of the kind, not indeed an absolute rebuke, but some pretty strong *hints* of disapprobation. Not a day passes in which I have not a number of soliciting visits, besides letters. If I could gratify all, or any of them, it would be a pleasure. I might, indeed, give them the recommendation and the promises they desire, and thereby please them for the present; but, when the certain disappointment of the expectations with which they will so obstinately flatter themselves shall arrive, they must curse me for complying with their mad requests, and not undeceiving them; and will become so many enemies to our cause and country.

You can have no conception how I am harassed. All my friends are sought out and teazed to teaze me. Great officers of all ranks, in all departments; ladies, great and small, besides professed solicitors, worry me from morning to night. The noise of every coach now that enters my court terrifies me. I am afraid to accept an invitation to dine abroad, being almost sure of meeting with some officer or officer's friend, who, as soon as I am put in good humor by a glass or two of champaigne, begins his attack upon me. Luckily I do not often in my sleep dream of these vexatious situations, or I should be afraid of what are now my only hours of comfort. If, therefore, you have the least remaining kindness for me, if you would not help to drive me out of France, for God's sake, my dear friend, let this your twenty third application be your last. Yours, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Introducing a Polish Officer.

Paris, 13 June, 1777.

SIR,

The bearer, M. le Comte Kotkouski, a Polish officer, is recommended to me by several persons of worth here, as a man of experience in military affairs, and of tried bravery. He has lost his family and estate in Poland, by fighting there in the cause of liberty, and wishes, by engaging in the same cause, to find a new country and new friends in America. Count Pulaski, who was a general of the confederates in Poland, and who is gone to join you, is esteemed one of the greatest officers in Europe. He can give you the character of this M. Kotkouski, who served under him as lieutenant-colonel.

It is with regret that I give letters of introduction to foreign officers, fearing that you may be troubled with more than you can provide for, or employ to their and your own satisfaction. When particular cases seem to have a claim to such letters, I hope you will excuse my taking the liberty. I give no expectations to those who apply for them; I promise nothing; I acquaint them, that their being placed when they arrive is a great uncertainty, and that, the voyage being long, expensive, and hazardous, I counsel them not to undertake it. This honest gentleman's zeal is not to be discouraged by such means; he determines to go and serve as a volunteer, if he cannot be employed immediately as an officer; but I wish and hope, that your Excellency may find a better situation for him, and that he will be a useful officer. He has the advantage of understanding English, and will soon speak

it intelligibly. He also speaks German, and some other European languages, and the Latin. With the truest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Introducing Baron de Frey.

Paris, 13 June, 1777

Sir,

The person, who will have the honor of delivering this to your Excellency, is Monsieur le Baron de Frey, who is well recommended to me as an officer of experience and merit, with a request that I would give him a letter of introduction. I have acquainted him, that you are rather overstocked with officers, and that his obtaining employment in your army is an uncertainty; but his zeal for the American cause is too great for any discouragements I can lay before him, and he goes over at his own expense, to take his chance, which is a mark of attachment that merits our regard. He will show your Excellency the commissions and proofs of his military service hitherto, and I beg leave to recommend him to your notice. With the sincerest esteem and respect,

B. Franklin.

TO RICHARD PETERS.

Passy, 12 September, 1777

Sir,

The bearer, M. Gérard, is recommended to me by M. Dubourg, a gentleman of distinction here, and a hearty friend to our cause. I enclose his letter, that

you may see the favorable manner in which he speaks of M. Gérard. I thereupon take the liberty of recommending the young gentleman to your civilities and advice, as he will be quite a stranger there, and to request that you would put him in the way of serving as a volunteer in our armies. I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Submission rendered impossible by the Conduct of Great Britain. — Cruel Treatment of the American Prisoners in England. — Propositions for their Relief.

Passy, 14 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly your letter of May 2d, including a copy of one you had sent me the year before, which never came to hand, and which it seems has been the case with some I wrote to you from America. Filled though our letters have always been with sentiments of good will to both countries, and earnest desires of preventing their ruin and promoting their mutual felicity, I have been apprehensive, that, if it were known that a correspondence subsisted between us, it might be attended with inconvenience to you. I have therefore been backward in writing, not caring to trust the post, and not well knowing whom else to trust with my letters. But being now assured of a safe conveyance, I venture to write to you, especially as I think the subject such a one as you may receive a letter upon without censure.

Happy should I have been, if the honest warnings I gave, of the fatal separation of interests, as well as of affections, that must attend the measures commenced

while I was in England, had been attended to, and the horrid mischief of this abominable war been thereby prevented. I should still be happy in any successful endeavours for restoring peace, consistent with the liberties, the safety, and the honor of America. As to our submitting to the government of Great Britain, it is vain to think of it. She has given us, by her numberless barbarities, (by her malice in bribing slaves to murder their masters, and savages to massacre the families of farmers, with her baseness in rewarding the unfaithfulness of servants, and debauching the virtue of honest seamen, intrusted with our property,) in the prosecution of the war, and in the treatment of the prisoners, so deep an impression of her depravity, that we never again can trust her in the management of our affairs and interests. It is now impossible to persuade our people, as I long endeavoured, that the war was merely ministerial, and that the nation bore still a good will to us. The infinite number of addresses printed in your gazettes, all approving the conduct of your government towards us, and encouraging our destruction by every possible means, the great majority in Parliament constantly manifesting the same sentiments, and the popular public rejoicings on occasion of any news of the slaughter of an innocent and virtuous people, fighting only in defence of their just rights; these, together with the recommendations of the same measures by even your celebrated moralists and divines, in their writings and sermons, that are still approved and applauded in your great national assemblies, all join in convincing us, that you are no longer the magnanimous, enlightened nation, we once esteemed you, and that you are unfit and unworthy to govern us, as not being able to govern your own passions.

But, as I have said, I should be nevertheless happy in seeing peace restored. For though, if my friends and the friends of liberty and virtue, who still remain in England, could be drawn out of it, a continuance of this war to the ruin of the rest would give me less concern, I cannot, as that removal is impossible, but wish for peace for their sakes, as well as for the sake of humanity, and preventing further carnage.

This wish of mine, ineffective as it may be, induces me to mention to you, that, between nations long exasperated against each other in war, some act of generosity and kindness towards prisoners on one side has softened resentment, and abated animosity on the other, so as to bring on an accommodation. You in England, if you wish for peace, have at present the opportunity of trying this means, with regard to the prisoners now in your gaols. They complain of very severe treatment. They are far from their friends and families, and winter is coming on, in which they must suffer extremely, if continued in their present situation; fed scantily on bad provisions, without warm lodging, clothes, or fire, and not suffered to invite or receive visits from their friends, or even from the humane and charitable of their enemies.

I can assure you, from my own certain knowledge, that your people, prisoners in America, have been treated with great kindness; they have been served with the same rations of wholesome provisions with our own troops, comfortable lodgings have been provided for them, and they have been allowed large bounds of villages in the healthy air, to walk and amuse themselves with on their parole. Where you have thought fit to employ contractors to supply your people, these contractors have been protected and aided in their operations. Some considerable act of kind-

ness towards our people would take off the reproach of inhumanity in that respect from the nation, and leave it where it ought with more certainty to lay, on the conductors of your war in America. This I hint to you, out of some remaining good will to a nation I once loved sincerely. But, as things are, and in my present temper of mind, not being over fond of receiving obligations, I shall content myself with proposing, that your government would allow us to send or employ a commissary to take some care of those unfortunate people. Perhaps on your representations this might speedily be obtained in England, though it was refused most inhumanly at New York.

If you could have leisure to visit the gaols in which they are confined, and should be desirous of knowing the truth relative to the treatment they receive, I wish you would take the trouble of distributing among the most necessitous according to their wants, five or six hundred pounds, for which your drafts on me here shall be punctually honored. You could then be able to speak with some certainty to the point in Parliament, and this might be attended with good effects.

If you cannot obtain for us permission to send a commissary, possibly you may find a trusty, humane, discreet person at Plymouth, and another at Portsmouth, who would undertake to communicate what relief we may be able to afford those unfortunate men, martyrs to the cause of liberty. Your King will not reward you for taking this trouble, but God will. I shall not mention the gratitude of America; you will have what is better, the applause of your own good conscience. Our captains have set at liberty above two hundred of your people, made prisoners by our armed vessels and brought into France, besides a great number dismissed at sea on your coasts, to whom

vessels were given to carry them in. But you have not returned us a man in exchange. If we had sold your people to the Moors at Sallee, as you have many of ours to the African and East India Companies, could you have complained?

In revising what I have written, I found too much warmth in it, and was about to strike out some parts. Yet I let them go, as they will afford you this one reflection; "If a man naturally cool, and rendered still cooler by old age, is so warmed by our treatment of his country, how much must those people in general be exasperated against us? And why are we making inveterate enemies by our barbarity, not only of the present inhabitants of a great country, but of their infinitely more numerous posterity; who will in future ages detest the name of *Englishman*, as much as the children in Holland now do those of *Alva* and *Spaniard*." This will certainly happen, unless your conduct is speedily changed, and the national resentment falls, where it ought to fall heavily, on your ministry, or perhaps rather on the King, whose will they only execute.

With the greatest esteem and affection, and best wishes for your prosperity, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO A FRIEND.*

Controversy about Pointed Conductors.

Passy, 14 October, 1777.

SIR,

I am much obliged by your communication of the letter from England. I am of your opinion, that it is

* A controversy had lately been raised among the philosophers in England, respecting *pointed* and *blunt* lightning conductors. Mr. Wilson

not proper for publication here. Our friend's expressions concerning Mr. Wilson, will be thought too angry to be made use of by one philosopher when speaking of another, and on a philosophical question. He seems as much heated about this *one point*, as the Jansenists and Molinists were about the *five*. As to my writing any thing on the subject, which you seem to desire, I think it not necessary, especially as I have nothing to add to what I have already said upon it in a paper read to the committee,* who ordered the conductors at Purfleet; which paper is printed in the last French edition of my writings.

I have never entered into any controversy in defence of my philosophical opinions; I leave them to take their chance in the world. If they are *right*, truth and experience will support them; if *wrong*, they ought to be refuted and rejected. Disputes are apt to sour one's temper, and disturb one's quiet. I have no private interest in the reception of my inventions by the world, having never made, nor proposed to make, the least profit by any of them. The King's changing his *pointed* conductors for *blunt* ones is, therefore, a matter of small importance to me. If I had a wish about it, it would be that he had rejected them altogether as ineffectual. For it is only since he thought himself and family safe from the thunder of Heaven, that he

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was the champion for blunt conductors, in opposition to the theory of Dr. Franklin. Pointed conductors had been erected at the Queen's palace, but by the advice of Mr. Wilson they were taken down, and blunt ones substituted in their place. Dr. Ingenhousz, who was then in England, took up the subject with considerable warmth against Mr. Wilson, and wrote a letter to a gentleman in Paris, which he desired might be shown to Dr. Franklin. The above letter was written to that gentleman, who, as requested, had communicated the one he received from Dr. Ingenhousz.

* Report on Lightning Conductors for the Powder Magazines at Purfleet, drawn up by Dr. Franklin, August 21, 1772. See Vol. V. p. 430

dared to use his own thunder in destroying his innocent subjects. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JAMES LOVELL.*

Numerous and vexatious Applications of foreign Officers for Appointments in the American Service.

Paris, 21 December, 1777.

Sir,

I see in a vote of Congress shown to me by Captain Franval, that Mr. Deane is disowned in some of his agreements with officers. I, who am upon the spot, and know the infinite difficulty of resisting the powerful solicitations of great men, who if disobliged might have it in their power to obstruct the supplies he was then obtaining, do not wonder, that, being then a stranger to the people, and unacquainted with the language, he was at first prevailed on to make some such agreements, when all were recommended, as they always are, as *officiers expérimentés, braves comme leurs épées, pleins de courage, de talents, et de zèle pour notre cause*, &c. &c., in short, mere Cesars, each of whom would have been an invaluable acquisition to America. You can have no conception how we are still besieged and worried on this head, our time cut to pieces by personal applications, besides those contained in dozens of letters by every post, which are so generally refused, that scarce one in a hundred obtains from us a simple recommendation to civilities.

I hope, therefore, that favorable allowance will be

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* Mr. Lovell was a member of Congress from Massachusetts, and for several years a member of the *Committee of Foreign Affairs*, in which capacity he corresponded with the American commissioners and ministers in Europe.

made to my worthy colleague on account of his situation at the time, as he has long since corrected that mistake, and daily approves himself to my certain knowledge an able, faithful, active, and extremely useful servant of the public; a testimony I think it my duty to take this occasion of giving to his merit, unasked, as, considering my great age, I may probably not live to give it personally in Congress, and I perceive he has enemies.

You will see the general news in the papers in particular; I can only say at present, that our affairs go well here; and that I am with much respect, Sir, &c. B. Franklin.

TO RALPH IZARD.

Passy, 29 January, 1778

Dear Sir,

I received yours late last evening. Present circumstances, which I will explain to you when I have the honor of seeing you, prevent my giving it a full answer now. The reasons you offer had before been all under consideration. But I must submit to remain some days under the opinion you appear to have formed, not only of my poor understanding in the general interests of America, but of my defects in sincerity, politeness, and attention to your instructions. These offences, I flatter myself, admit of fair excuses, or rather will be found not to have existed. You mention, that you *feel yourself hurt*. Permit me to offer you a maxim, which has through life been of use to me, and may be so to you, in preventing such imaginary hurts. It is, "always to *suppose* one's friends *may be right*, till one *finds* them wrong, rather than *to suppose them wrong* till one *finds* them right." You have

heard and imagined all that can be said or supposed on one side of the question, but not on the other. I am nevertheless, with sincere esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO JAMES HUTTON.†

On the Means for producing a Reconciliation between Great Britain and America.

Passy, 1 February, 1778.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

You desired, that if I had no proposition to make, I would at least give my advice. I think it is Ariosto who says, that all things lost on earth are to be found in the moon; on which somebody remarked, that there must be a great deal of good advice in the moon. If so, there is a good deal of mine, formerly given and lost in this business. I will, however, at your request give a little more, but without the least expectation that it will be followed; for none but God can at the

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* Mr. Izard was appointed by Congress a Commissioner to the court of Tuscany. The state of affairs in Europe was such, however, that he did not go to Florence, but remained in Paris during the whole period of his appointment. He was there while the treaty of alliance was in the progress of negotiation, and he considered himself improperly overlooked in not being consulted as to certain parts of the treaty by the other Commissioners. He wrote a complaining letter on the subject to Dr. Franklin, to which the above is an answer. His letter may be seen in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 372. All the particulars respecting the treaty, of an official character, may be found in the first and second volumes of the same work.

† James Hutton was a son of Dr. Hutton, (who in the early part of his life had been a bookseller,) and was for many years secretary to the society of Moravians. He died April 25th, 1795, in his eightieth year, at Oxstead Cottage, Surrey; and was buried in the Moravian cemetery at Chelsea. He was a well known character and very generally esteemed.

same time give good counsel, and wisdom to make use of it.

You have lost by this mad war, and the barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the government and commerce of America, and the public revenues and private wealth arising from that commerce, but what is more, you have lost the esteem, respect, friendship, and affection of all that great and growing people, who consider you at present, and whose posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest nation upon earth. A peace you may undoubtedly obtain by dropping all your pretensions to govern us; and, by your superior skill in huckstering negotiation, you may possibly make such an apparently advantageous bargain, as shall be applauded in your Parliament; but, if you cannot, with the peace, recover the affections of that people, it will not be a lasting nor a profitable one, nor will it afford you any part of that strength, which you once had by your union with them, and might (if you had been wise enough to take advice) have still retained.

To recover their respect and affection, you must tread back the steps you have taken. Instead of honoring and rewarding the American advisers and pro-

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He was a faithful brother of the Moravian fraternity fifty-five years; the latter part of his life was spent literally in going about doing good, and his charities were confined to no sect. He married a lady of the Moravian nation and religion, but had no children, and was a widower some years before his death. Mr. Hutton possessed strong sense, with quick feelings and apprehensions, which the illumination of his countenance evinced even at seventy, though his difficulty of hearing was such, that he could only converse by the assistance of an ear-trumpet. He was highly esteemed by their present Majesties, and well known to many of the nobility and men of letters; nor was he refused admittance to the highest ranks, even at Buckingham-House, though his ardent benevolence inclined him greatly to neglect his own dress, that he might the better feed the hungry and cover the naked. — W. T. F.

moters of this war, you should disgrace them; with all those who have inflamed the nation against America by their malicious writings; and all the ministers and generals who have prosecuted the war with such inhumanity. This would show a national change of disposition, and a disapprobation of what had passed.

In proposing terms, you should not only grant such as the necessity of your affairs may evidently oblige you to grant, but such additional ones as may show your generosity, and thereby demonstrate your good will. For instance, perhaps you might, by your treaty, retain all Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas. But if you would have a real friendly as well as able ally in America, and avoid all occasion of future discord, which will otherwise be continually arising on your American frontiers, you should throw in those countries. And you may call it, if you please, an indemnification for the burning of their towns, which indemnification will otherwise be some time or other demanded.

I know your people will not see the utility of such measures, and will never follow them, and even call it insolence and impudence in me to mention them. I have, however, complied with your desire, and am, as ever, your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.*

P. S. *February 12th.*—I wrote the above some time before I received yours, acquainting me with your

* At this time, it seems, a rumor was current in Paris, that a reconciliation had been effected by a treaty in America. The rumor originated in England, and came to the ears of Count de Vergennes. He wrote on the subject to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane, who replied; "The news you have received from England cannot be true; no treaty would be entered into with Howe by Washington when the Congress was at hand; and Howe could have no propositions to make, but such as were authorized by the act of Parliament, and had been long since

speedy and safe return, which gave me pleasure. I doubted after I had written it, whether it would be well to send it; for as your proud nation despises us exceedingly, and demands and expects absolute and humble submission, all talk of treaty must appear impudence, and tend to provoke rather than conciliate. As you still press me by your last to say something, I conclude to send what I had written, for I think the advice is good, though it must be useless; and I cannot, as some amongst you desire, make propositions, having none committed to me to make; but we can treat, if any are made to us; which, however, we do

rejected, viz. *Pardon, upon Submission.* In short, we esteem the story of a treaty in America to be merely an artifice of the stockjobbers to keep up the funds." — *February 1st.*

Mr. Hutton had recently been in Paris. Immediately after his return to London, he wrote to Dr. Franklin as follows.

"I got to my own house in seventy-three hours from Paris. I shall never forget your kindness to me, and your kind intentions to serve my brethren. The sensation I had of the certain miseries of war, that would attend all parties embarked in it, caused my heart almost to break. I always thought it a sad misfortune, that there was such a thing as war upon earth. When I left England, I fancied that you and Mr. Deane could treat about peace. I wished it ardently; but, having no commission, nor any thing to offer, I was sorry to hear nothing on your side, that I could mention, as a ground to treat upon, to such as I fancied could give it weight. I was a loving volunteer, loving both people with no common ardor, a friend to peace, a hater of discord, with horror at all bloodshed, wishing you secure in your liberties, and guarded for ever against all apprehensions. I did, before I set out, and I do now still at this moment, and I think on better grounds, believe that any thing short of absolute independency almost would be practicable, and could take place. There is such a spirit and temper now in the nation, that I cannot think independency could be ventured to be proposed. If you and Mr. Deane could give me any hint of any thing practicable, you considering not only your case but ours, I will venture to try what could be done. I know your handwriting, as well as I do your heart. Direct your answer to me, Queen's Row, Pimlico, Westminster, under cover to M. Court de Gebelin, Rue Pompée, Paris, who will put a cover over it; and my friend Mr. Fullerton will, without examination, forward it safe to me in the packet of Lord Stormont." — *London. January 27th*, 1778.

not expect. I abominate with you all murder, and I may add, that the slaughter of men in an unjust cause is nothing less than murder; I therefore never think of your present ministers and their abettors, but with the image, strongly painted in my view, of their hands, red, wet, and dropping with the blood of my countrymen, friends, and relations. No peace can be signed by those hands. Peace and friendship will, nevertheless, subsist for ever between Mr. Hutton and his affectionate friend, B. F.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

American Prisoners in England. — Conduct of France in Regard to the United States. — Change of Ministry necessary for a Conciliation.

Passy, 12 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

A thousand thanks for your so readily engaging in the means of relieving our poor captives, and the pains you have taken, and the advances you have made, for that purpose. I received your kind letter of the 3d instant, and send you enclosed a bill of one hundred pounds. I much approve of Mr. Wren's prudent, as well as benevolent conduct in the disposition of the money, and wish him to continue doing what shall appear to him and to you to be right, which I am persuaded will appear the same to me and my colleagues here. I beg you will present him, when you write, my respectful acknowledgments.

Your "earnest caution and request, that nothing may ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France, for that times may mend, and that an American must always be a stranger in France, but that

Great Britain may for ages to come be their home," marks the goodness of your heart, your regard for us, and love of your country. But, when your nation is hiring all the cut-throats it can collect, of all countries and colors, to destroy us, it is hard to persuade us not to ask or accept aid from any power, that may be prevailed with to grant it; and this only from the hope, that, though you now thirst for our blood, and pursue us with fire and sword, you may, in some future time, treat us kindly. This is too much patience to be expected of us; indeed, I think it is not in human nature.

The Americans are received and treated here in France with a cordiality, a respect, and affection they never experienced in England when they most deserved it; and which is now (after all the pains taken to exasperate the English against them, and render them odious as well as contemptible,) less to be expected there than ever. And I cannot see why we may not, upon an alliance, hope for a continuance of it, at least, as much as the Swiss enjoy, with whom France has maintained a faithful friendship for two hundred years past, and whose people appear to live here in as much esteem as the natives. America has been *forced* and *driven* into the arms of France. She was a dutiful and virtuous daughter. A cruel mother-in-law turned her out of doors, defamed her, and sought her life. All the world knows her innocence, and takes her part; and her friends hope soon to see her honorably married. They can never persuade her return and submission to so barbarous an enemy. In her future prosperity, if she forgets and forgives, it is all that can be reasonably expected of her. I believe she will make as good and useful a wife as she did a daughter, that her husband will love and

honor her, and that the family, from which she was so wickedly expelled, will long regret the loss of her.

I know not whether a peace with us is desired in England; I rather think it is not at present, unless on the old impossible terms of submission and receiving pardon. Whenever you shall be disposed to make peace upon equal and reasonable terms, you will find little difficulty, if you get first an honest ministry. The present have all along acted so deceitfully and treacherously, as well as inhumanly, towards the Americans, that I imagine, that the absolute want of all confidence in them will make a treaty, at present, between them and the Congress impracticable.

The subscription for the prisoners will have excellent effects in favor of England and Englishmen. The Scotch subscriptions for raising troops to destroy us, though amounting to much greater sums, will not do their nation half so much good. If you have an opportunity, I wish you would express our respectful acknowledgments and thanks to your committee and contributors, whose benefactions will make our poor people as comfortable as their situation can permit. Adieu, my dear friend. Accept my thanks for the excellent papers you enclosed to me. Your endeavours for peace, though unsuccessful, will always be a comfort to you, and in time, when this mad war shall be universally execrated, will be a solid addition to your reputation. I am ever, with the highest esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. An old friend of mine, Mr. Hutton, a chief of the Moravians, who is often at the Queen's palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the King, was over here lately. He pretended to no commission, but urged me much to propose some terms of peace, which

I avoided. He has written to me since his return, pressing the same thing, and expressing with some confidence his opinion, that we might have every thing short of absolute independence, &c. Enclosed I send my answers open, that you may read them, and, if you please, copy, before you deliver or forward them. They will serve to show you more fully my sentiments, though they serve no other purpose. B. F.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Lord North's Plan of Reconciliation.

London, 20 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

With respect to Lord North's plan of peace, much of course will be debated, of the sincerity or insincerity, and whether it be practicable or admissible; to all which I say, that the great object with me is a cessation of arms. I admire much the spirit of your sentiments to Lord Howe. Trade, and revenue, and supremacy *are not objects for which men may justly spill each others' blood.** I think if we can once obtain a cessation of arms, that the two parties will not go to blood again.

I have no reason to suspect Lord North of insincerity. When a man uses for argument, that peace is preferable to the indefinite continuation of a bloody and ruinous war, I think he gives, in some sort, a pledge of his sincerity; and this is all that I can say upon the matter. America, in any negotiation, will doubtless have a due attention to her own safety, and possibly, in the present irritable state of things, this kind of jealousy may proceed too far. I wish to see a

* See the letter to Lord Howe, Vol. V. p. 99.

treaty begun. It is *dimidium facti.* There may possibly be many altercations in a popular assembly, and amongst them there may be expressions of resentment to America, and such as might be grating to the ears of an American; but it is a good thing to be even talking about peace. I am very glad of a public profession of desiring peace. It may abate animosities. I am informed, through the means of a gentleman connected with administration, that a vessel is despatched to America to carry the news, that a plan of peace is under consideration of Parliament.

For my own part, I can only, as a single man, entreat those, who have any influence in American counsels, to arrest the conclusion of any fatal treaty with the House of Bourbon. I should think it not prudent to put the principles and plan of a certain motion, which you have seen in the shape of an address to the King, to the direct question in the House, *ay* or *no.* A direct negative upon such a question, appearing in the votes, might have an ill effect in America. Wise men will be contented if things are in a good way. If there should be any things in the terms proposed on this side of the water, which are not adequate to the expectations of America, they will of course give their reasons for the consideration of Parliament. In popular counsels, violent and irritating things may be said, which, being reported, may do much harm. If one member says, *Delenda est Carthago,* that may be imputed to the nation at large; and, what is the worst part of the story, the recoil of such an imputation may exasperate the nation greatly, and thus mutual suspicions may aggravate animosities. I speak thus anxiously to you, knowing the goodness of your disposition to apply the balm of peace to the wounds of civil discord. Yours most affectionately,

D. Hartley.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Treaty of Alliance and Commerce between France and the United States.

Passy, 21 February, 1778.

SIR,

I received your favor by Mr. Austin, with your most agreeable congratulations on the success of the American arms in the northern department.* In return, give me leave to congratulate you on the success of our negotiations here, in the completion of the two treaties with his Most Christian Majesty; the one of amity and commerce, on the plan of that proposed by Congress, with some good additions; the other of alliance for mutual defence, in which the Most Christian King agrees to make a common cause with the United States, if England attempts to obstruct the commerce of his subjects with them; and guaranties to the United States their liberty, sovereignty, and independence, absolute and unlimited, with all the possessions they now have, or may have, at the conclusion of the war; and the States in return guaranty to him his possessions in the West Indies. The great principle in both treaties is a perfect equality and reciprocity; no advantage to be demanded by France, or privileges in commerce, which the States may not grant to any and every other nation.

In short, the King has treated with us generously and magnanimously; taken no advantage of our present difficulties, to exact terms which we should not willingly grant, when established in prosperity and power. I may add, that he has acted wiseyl in wish-

* Surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga.

ing the friendship contracted by these treaties may be durable, which probably might not be, if a contrary conduct had taken place.

Several of the American ships, with stores for the Congress, are now about sailing, under the convoy of a French squadron. England is in great consternation, and the minister, on the 17th instant, confessing that all his measures had been wrong, and that peace was necessary, proposed two bills for quieting America; but they are full of artifice and deceit, and will, I am confident, be treated accordingly by our country.

I think you must have much satisfaction in so valuable a son, whom I wish safe back to you, and am with great esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. The treaties were signed by the plenopotentiaries on both sides, February 6th, but are still for some reasons kept secret, though soon to be published. It is understood that Spain will soon accede to the same. The treaties are forwarded to Congress by this conveyance.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Lord North. — Rumor of a Treaty between General Washington and General Howe.

Passy, 23 February, 1778.

Sir,

The enclosed, which you sent me, contained a letter from Mr. Hartley, in which he acquaints me, that on the 17th Lord North had made his propositions towards a conciliation with America, and asked leave to bring in two bills, one to renounce all claim of

taxation, the other to empower commissioners to treat with any persons or bodies of men in America on a peace; which was unanimously agreed to. He tells me Lord North had expressed to him the strongest desire of accommodation, and even wished him to come over to Paris and talk with us. I should send you the letter, which marks strongly the consternation they are in; but, M. Gérard having written a note acquainting Mr. Deane that they had news from England that a treaty was on foot between Washington and Howe, and desiring to know if we had any intelligence of it, I wrote the enclosed in answer, and sent Mr. Hartley's letter to him, to show that the ministers in England had no such news. Mr. Hartley refers me to Mr. Thornton for the titles of the two bills. I return Mr. Thornton's letters. I am, very respectfully, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Lord North's Conciliatory Bill. — Advice to the English Whigs.

Passy, 26 February, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I received yours of the 18th and 20th of this month, with Lord North's proposed bill. The more I see of the ideas and projects of your ministry, and their little arts and schemes of amusing and dividing us, the more I admire the prudent, manly, and magnanimous propositions contained in your intended motion for an address to the King. What reliance can we have on an act expressing itself to be only a declaration of the *intention* of Parliament concerning the *exercise* of the right of imposing taxes in America, when, in the bill

itself, as well as in the title, a right is supposed and claimed, which never existed; and a *present intention* only is declared not to use it, which may be changed by another act next session, with a preamble, that, this *intention* being found inexpedient, it is thought proper to repeal this act, and resume the exercise of *the right* in its full extent. If any solid permanent benefit was intended by this, why is it confined to the colonies of North America, and not extended to the loyal ones in the sugar islands? But it is now useless to criticize, as all acts that suppose your future government of the colonies can be no longer significant.

In the act for appointing Commissioners, instead of full powers to agree upon terms of peace and friendship, with a promise of ratifying such treaty as they shall make in pursuance of those powers, it is declared, that their agreements shall have no force nor effect, nor be carried into execution, till approved of by Parliament; so that every thing of importance will be uncertain. But they are allowed to proclaim a cessation of arms, and revoke their proclamation, as soon as, in consequence of it, our militia have been allowed to go home; they may suspend the operation of acts, prohibiting trade, and take off that suspension when our merchants, in consequence of it, have been induced to send their ships to sea; in short, they may do every thing that can have a tendency to divide and distract us, but nothing that can afford us security. Indeed, Sir, your ministers do not know us. We may not be quite so cunning as they, but we have really more sense, as well as more courage, than they have ever been willing to give us credit for; and I am persuaded, these acts will rather obstruct peace than promote it, and that they will not answer in America the mischievous and malevolent ends for which

they were intended. In England they may indeed amuse the public creditors, give hopes and expectations, that shall be of some present use, and continue the mismanagers a little longer in their places. *Voilà tout!*

In return for your repeated advice to us, not to conclude any treaty with the House of Bourbon, permit me to give (through you) a little advice to the Whigs in England. Let nothing induce them to join with the Tories, in supporting and continuing this wicked war against the Whigs of America, whose assistance they may hereafter want to secure their own liberties, or whose country they may be glad to retire to for the enjoyment of them.

If peace, by a treaty with America, upon equal terms, were really desired, your Commissioners need not go there for it; supposing, as by the bill they are empowered "to treat with such person or persons, as in their wisdom and discretion they shall think meet," they should happen to conceive, that the Commissioners of the Congress at Paris might be included in that description. I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. Seriously, on further thoughts, I am of opinion, that, if wise and honest men, such as Sir George Saville, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and yourself, were to come over here immediately with powers to treat, you might not only obtain peace with America, but prevent a war with France.

TO MRS. CATHERINE GREENE.

Paris, 28 February, 1778.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Don't be offended at the word *old.* I don't mean to call you an *old woman;* it relates only to the age of our friendship; which, on my part, has always been a sincerely affectionate one, and, I flatter myself, the same on yours.

I received your kind letter from Boston of October 28th, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare of you and your family. I continue hearty, as do my two grandsons, who present their respects to you and Mr. Greene, being pleased with your remembrance of them. We are all glad to hear of Ray, for we all love him. I have been often much concerned for my friends at Warwic, hearing that the enemy was so near them. I hope your troubles will not be of much longer duration; for, though the wickedness of the English court, and its malice against us, are as great as ever, its horns are shortened, its strength diminishes daily, and we have formed an alliance here, and shall form others, that will help to keep the bull quiet, and make him orderly.

I chat, you see, as usual, any how with you, who are kind enough never to criticize improprieties in my compositions, or any thing else. I see by yours that my sister's granddaughter is married. I wish the young folks joy and lasting happiness. I pity my poor old sister, to be so harassed and driven about by the enemy; for I feel a little myself the inconvenience of being driven about by my friends.

I live here in great respect, and dine every day with great folks; but I still long for home and for repose; and should be happy to eat Indian pudding

in your company, and under your hospitable roof. Remember me kindly to the remainder of the Wards, and to all that wish me well. Assure Mr. Greene of my sincere esteem and respect, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Lord North's Conciliatory Bill. — Lord George Germain.

Golden Square, 3 March, 1778.

Dear Sir,

Do not let us despair now. There seems, I hope, to be a disposition on all sides to peace. The *Conciliatory Bill*, as it is called, passed the House of Commons yesterday. The sentiments of Lord North towards peace have been declared by the bill itself, and by the method and principles which he avowed when he brought it in. Lord George Germain, who had not opened his lips in the course of the bill, was called upon yesterday to declare whether he concurred heartily in the measure, or whether he remained in his old sentiments. He declared his hearty concurrence with the bill, in the present circumstances of things, and that he would advise the giving such instructions to the Commissioners under the bill, as would be most likely to facilitate peace. I hope the Commissioners will meet with good dispositions on the other side of the water, and that we may once more be united in affections and interests.

We are so full of business at present, that I must refer you for a detail of many particulars to some future opportunity of a safe conveyance. I send you

this by a very worthy man, who is leaving this country; but I have hopes, that we may all meet some day again in peace. I am, dear Sir, &c.

D. HARTLEY.

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Debate in Parliament on a Peace with America.

London, 5 March, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

There is a great variety of opinions concerning America. It would take a volume to explain them, as it would be necessary to state the grounds upon which they go, and the objects to which they point. To foreigners they must be totally unintelligible, as they cannot combine the different managements which such a government as ours requires to effect any good. Several opinions are founded upon supposed intelligence from you and your friends. Those whom I converse with, having no such lights, continue exactly their old plan of conduct, wishing an end to the war at all events, and a free and equal union, if possible, afterwards; foreseeing the utmost pitch of wealth, freedom, and happiness to be attainable on such a system, and nothing but war, confusion, poverty, and ruin upon any other.

You have too much penetration, and these ideas were formerly too much your own, for you to require, at present, much explanation of them. It is therefore sufficient to assure you of the sincerity of those that propose them, and their unalterable determination to pursue them with every degree of liberality and confidence. The distractions, which to a common eye appear so formidable, may lay the foundation of what,

however right and just, would otherwise be unattainable. I write this, for obvious reasons, in perfect confidence. In the debate of yesterday, Lord Shelburne was for returning to as much of the old connexion as would be attainable. He thought any allusions to the doctrine of independence from the court, like the robber firing the house to cover his escape and hide his theft; and that the connexion ought to be tried. He contrasted the advantages to America of a free union, and the disadvantages of a *uti possidetis;* and made light of a commercial alliance upon general principles. As to the present state of things, he thought the Spanish statesman's advice a proper address for the city. "For your Majesty's comfort, you have but two enemies upon earth; one, the whole world; the other, your own ministers."

There was some question out of doors about the phrase of "one purse"; by which I do not find any thing more was meant than the original idea of bringing in America, more as a check upon our extravagance, than as contributor; or, at least, so far as the last goes, in an honest and fair proportion, such as shall suit the circumstances of both, and contribute to the real union, by having more locks than one to a chest that of late has had none.

The Duke of Grafton was thoroughly convinced of a commercial treaty. Lord Weymouth said he *knew* no commercial treaty. Lord Radnor wished the American war ended on any terms. The Duke of Richmond took a manly line, and attacked your old friend Lord Hillsborough, who usually blundered against himself, but now against his friends. Lord Suffolk had his usual pomp and hardness; looked for efficacy from his bills, yet supposed you *ab origine* inclined to independence; said that many would be detached, and

the force be rendered efficacious; that he kept *all his principles*, and yielded *only* to the necessity of prudence, which made early concession with misfortune and disappointment better than later concessions upon complete victory; upon *victory* terms were always intended. Lord Temple reprobated the concessions, and equally the mad, foolish minister, who could neither keep peace, make war, nor negotiate peace again. He wanted a treaty without Parliament, and preliminaries settled before concession. Yours ever most affectionately, BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Concerning Bills drawn by Congress on the Commissioners.

Passy, 17 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

One of the Messrs. Beaumann of Bordeaux some time since told me, that they intended to send a packet every month to America, on their own account, they having great concerns there. He offered, indeed, to carry our despatches; but, as at this distance we could not know the captains, nor the degree of confidence that might be placed in them, and having other conveyances, I have not yet seen occasion to make use of that offer. These are the packets I mentioned to the gentleman, as likely to afford him the convenience of a passage, and he understood more than I said to him, when he imagined there was a packet to sail soon with our despatches. I knew of no such thing proposed; and certainly, if it had been proposed by me, or with my knowledge, I should have acquainted you with it.

A gentleman, lately arrived from Boston, has presented for acceptance bills drawn on us by Mr. Hancock, as the President of the Congress, for about one hundred and eighty thousand livres. I have also received a letter, mentioning that other bills are drawn on us by Mr. Laurens, the present President, of which an account is promised in a future letter, this not giving the amount, but only directing us to accept them when they appear. The one hundred and eighty thousand livres are an old debt contracted by our army in Canada, and not for interest of money. What the others are, I know not; and I cannot conceive what encouragement the Congress could have had from any of us to draw on us for any thing but that interest. I suppose their difficulties have compelled them to it. I see we shall be distressed here by these proceedings, and I want to consult with you about the means of paying the bills. If you will name an hour, when you shall be at leisure to-day, I will call upon you I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JAMES HUTTON.

Passy, 24 March, 1778.

My dear old friend was in the right, not "to call in question the sincerity of my words, where I say, February the 12th, *we can treat, if any propositions are made to us.*" They were true then, and are so still, if Britain has not declared war with France; for in that case we shall undoubtedly think ourselves obliged to continue the war as long as she does. But methinks you should have taken us at our word, and have sent immediately your propositions in order to prevent such

a war, if you did not choose it. Still I conceive it would be well to do it, if you have not already rashly begun the war. Assure yourself, nobody more sincerely wishes perpetual peace among men than I do; but there is a prior wish, that they would be equitable and just, otherwise such peace is not possible, and indeed wicked men have no right to expect it. Adieu. I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO RALPH IZARD.

Passy, 30 March, 1778.

SIR,

From the account you give me of the man, who pretends to be of Carolina, as well as from my own observation of his behaviour, I entertain no good opinion of him, and shall not give him the pass he desires.

Much and very important business has hitherto prevented my giving you the satisfaction you desired, but you may depend upon my endeavouring to give it to you as soon as possible.* An answer was written to

* The same grievance is here alluded to, as in the letter of January 29th. Mr. Izard thought himself slighted by the Commissioners, in regard to the treaty, and particularly by Dr. Franklin, and requested an explanation. See above, p. 230. Mr. Izard waited impatiently for this explanation in writing, but, not receiving it, he sent his secretary, Mr. John J. Pringle, with a letter to Dr. Franklin. The following is Mr. Pringle's account of the interview, as he reported it to Mr. Izard.

"In compliance with your request, I waited on Dr. Franklin and delivered to him your letter; he had scarcely read it when he said, 'Mr. Izard has written me a very angry letter; please to tell him, that he has only made use of general assertions of my having done wrong, which I cannot otherwise answer than by denying. If I have given him any causes of offence, he should let me know what they are.' To this I replied, 'that you had been kind enough to form so good an opinion of me, as to admit me into a share of your confidence; therefore I could take upon me to say, that you were persuaded you had

your letter of the 5th of this month, and signed by us all, which I thought had been sent to you till Mr. Lee informed me, that, having communicated to you the contents, you told him it would not be satisfactory, and desired it might be reconsidered, and he had accordingly stopped it for that purpose. We have not since had an opportunity of reconsidering it; and, as

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clearly stated, in the several letters he had received from you, circumstances affording sufficient grounds of offence.' He said, 'he should be glad to know what those circumstances were.' I answered, in the first place, 'that, conceiving it your duty as a member of the States, having a considerable fortune there, and intrusted with a commission from Congress, to communicate as occasion offered all the intelligence you could, you found this communication greatly obstructed by a concealment on the part of Dr. Franklin of proper opportunities, when it was quite unnecessary, or when the end of secrecy might be answered, though you had been intrusted with the knowledge of them.' Upon which Dr. Franklin told me, 'that you had only complained of this in the present letter, and as to the particular opportunity you mentioned by M. Gérard, or Mr. Deane, he had not himself looked upon it as a good or proper one, and had not himself made use of it to write.'

"As another ground of complaint I observed, 'that, while the commercial treaty was on the carpet, you considered one article as highly unreasonable and inexpedient, and therefore expressly objected to it: you had in a letter fully specified the reasons upon which your disapprobation was founded, and had sent this letter to Dr. Franklin, in hopes of his removing your scruples, and setting you right if you were wrong, or letting your reasons and objections, if they were just, produce some good effect before the conclusion of the treaty, but you had never been favored with any answer on the subject, though you had repeatedly requested it.' Dr. Franklin alleged, 'that he would have given a full and satisfactory answer, but he had been prevented by business and various avocations; that he was still willing to give one, but could not conceive why you should be so impatient. Suppose, he could not give it for a month hence, what great inconvenience would it occasion?' I observed, 'that the sooner you had it, you might be the better prepared to guard against any misrepresentation.' Dr. Franklin assured me, that he had not been, nor would he ever be, guilty of any misrepresentation; so far from it, that he had not even written any thing concerning the matter. I told him, perhaps you might choose to lay it before Congress, and his answer might enable you to do it more fully and satisfactorily. Dr. Franklin said you should have an answer, but you must be patient; for he really was very much engaged

the end is now answered by the communication of the treaty, perhaps it is not necessary.

I condole with you sincerely on the great loss sustained in Charleston by the fire in January last, said to have destroyed six hundred houses, valued with the goods at a million sterling. I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

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by other business, and interrupted by people continually coming in upon him, though some upon frivolous errands, as was the case with the two Frenchmen, just gone away, who came only to ask him to buy cloth.

"I suggested as a third ground of complaint, that you had been directed by the Congress to propose to the court of Tuscany a commercial treaty similar to the one concluded with this court, which you therefore required as necessary for your regulation, in pursuance of the instructions of Congress, who directed you should have, not only the original treaty, but also the alterations which might be proposed; both were nevertheless withheld from you by Dr. Franklin without the least regard to your applications. Dr. Franklin replied, 'Did he go into Tuscany? Has not the treaty been sent to him?' I said, you had good reasons for staying; that the treaty was kept from you till the other day, when perhaps it was necessary for you to have had it as early as possible, even previous to your departure, to give it the maturer consideration, and because there might be explanations you would like to have made here; or observations might occur to you, which you might think it advisable to communicate to Congress, to have their further instructions as soon as you could.

"I do not recollect, that Dr. Franklin made any direct reply to this. He observed, that he was clear he had not given you any just cause of offence, or reasonable grounds of complaint, that he was studious to avoid contention; he acknowledged that he owed you an answer, but, though he was in your debt, he hoped you would be a merciful creditor; he would say, as the debtor in the Scripture, 'have patience, and I will pay thee all;' that you certainly ought to give him time, as you had urged so much matter as would require a pamphlet in answer. I told him, that I was sure it was far from your disposition to court quarrels; that if the reasons he gave in his answer to you were just and satisfactory, you would undoubtedly allow them their full weight; that satisfaction you were desirous of having, and were anxious to have the affair ended. He said, he should endeavour to do it as soon as possible; in the mean time, he hoped to have no more such angry letters from you; his answer he promised should be a cool one, and that people who wrote such angry letters should keep them, till they sufficiently reflected on the contents, before they sent them.—*April 26th.*

TO WILLIAM PULTENEY.*

America cannot treat on any Terms short of Independence; nor at all in Case England makes War against France.

Passy, 30 March, 1778.

SIR,

When I first had the honor of conversing with you on the subject of peace, I mentioned it as my opinion, that every proposition, which implied our voluntarily agreeing to return to a dependence on Britain, was now become impossible; that a peace on equal terms undoubtedly might be made; and that, though we had

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* Mr. Pulteney was a member of Parliament, and had come over to Paris, as a secret agent from the ministry, for the purpose of consulting Dr. Franklin respecting the terms of a reconciliation with America, contained in Lord North's bill for appointing commissioners. That the object of his visit might not be publicly suspected, he assumed the name of Williams. The above letter is an answer to the following note; or rather the substance of a conversation, that had passed between them in consequence of it. The letter was not sent. See letter to David Hartley, dated October 26th, 1778.

"29 March, 1778.

"Mr. Williams returned this morning to Paris, and will be glad to see Dr. Franklin, whenever it is convenient for the Doctor, at the Hôtel Frasilière, Rue Tournon. It is near the hotel where he lodged when the Doctor saw him a fortnight ago. He does not propose to go abroad, and therefore the Doctor will find him at any hour. He understands that Mr. Alexander is not yet returned from Dijon, which he regrets."

Mr. Alexander soon returned to Paris, and wrote to Dr. Franklin, on the 4th of April, as follows.

"Upon a night's reflection, it is thought right that you should be possessed of the enclosed, to be afterwards returned to me without taking a copy, in case no business is done. Will you let me know by the bearer, if we are to see you in town to-day, and when, that I may be at hand?"

The paper here mentioned, as enclosed probably contained the propositions, which had been brought by Mr. Pulteney, and the substance of which he had communicated to Dr. Franklin in conversation

no particular powers to treat of peace with England, we had general powers to make treaties of peace, amity, and commerce, with any State in Europe, by which I thought we might be authorized to treat with Britain; who, if sincerely disposed to peace, might save time and much bloodshed by treating with us directly.

I also gave it as my opinion, that, in the treaty to be made, Britain should endeavour, by the fairness and generosity of the terms she offered, to recover the esteem, confidence, and affection of America, without which the peace could not be so beneficial, as it was not likely to be lasting; in this I had the pleasure to find you of my opinion.

But I see, by the propositions you have communicated to me, that the ministers cannot yet divest themselves of the idea, that the power of Parliament over us is constitutionally absolute and unlimited; and that the limitations they may be willing now to put to it by treaty are so many favors, or so many benefits, for which we are to make compensation.

As our opinions in America are totally different, a treaty on the terms proposed appears to me utterly unpracticable, either here or there. Here we certainly cannot make it, having not the smallest authority to make even the declaration specified in the proposed letter, without which, if I understood you right, treating with us cannot be commenced.

I sincerely wish as much for peace as you do, and I have enough remaining of good will for England to wish it for her sake as well as for our own, and for the sake of humanity. In the present state of things, the proper means of obtaining it, in my opinion, are, to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and then enter at once into a treaty with us for a suspension of arms, with the usual provisions relating

to distances; and another for establishing peace, friendship, and commerce, such as France has made. This might prevent a war between you and that kingdom, which, in the present circumstances and temper of the two nations, an accident may bring on every day, though contrary to the interest and without the previous intention of either. Such a treaty we might probably now make, with the approbation of our friends; but, if you go to war with them on account of their friendship for us, we are bound by ties, stronger than can be formed by any treaty, to fight against you with them, as long as the war against them shall continue.

May God at last grant that wisdom to your national councils, which he seems long to have denied them, and which only sincere, just, and humane intentions can merit or expect. With great personal esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Relating to Mr. Deane's Conduct in France.

Passy, 31 March, 1778.

SIR,

My colleague, Mr. Deane, being recalled by Congress, and no reasons given that have yet appeared here, it is apprehended to be the effect of some misrepresentations from an enemy or two at Paris and at Nantes. I have no doubt, that he will be able clearly to justify himself; but, having lived intimately with him now fifteen months, the greatest part of the time in the same house, and been a constant witness of his public conduct, I cannot omit giving this testimony, though unasked, in his behalf, that I esteem him a

faithful, active, and able minister, who, to my knowledge, has done in various ways great and important services to his country, whose interests I wish may always, by every one in her employ, be as much and as effectually promoted. With my dutiful respects to the Congress, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

TO ARTHUR LEE.

On the Settlement of the Commissioners' Accounts.

Passy 1 April, 1778.

SIR,

There is a style in some of your letters. I observe it particularly in the last, whereby superior merit is assumed to yourself in point of care and attention to business, and blame is insinuated on your colleagues without making yourself accountable, by a direct charge of negligence or unfaithfulness, which has the appearance of being as artful as it is unkind. In the present case I think the insinuation groundless.

I do not know that either Mr. Deane or myself ever showed any unwillingness to settle the public accounts. The banker's book always contained the whole. You could at any time as easily have obtained the account from them as either of us, and you had abundantly more leisure. If, on examining it, you had wanted explanation of any article, you might have called for it and had it. You never did either. As soon as I obtained the account, I put it into your hands, and desired you to look into it, and I have heard no more of it since till now, just as Mr. Deane was on the point of departing. Mr. Deane, however, left with me before the receipt of your letter both the public papers,

and explications of the several articles in the account that came within his knowledge. With these materials, I suppose we can settle the account whenever you please. You have only to name the day and place, and I will attend to the business with you. I have the honor to be, with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Respecting Mr. Lee's extraordinary Conduct in Regard to the personal Intercourse of the Commissioners.

Passy, 4 April, 1778.

SIR,

Mr. Deane communicated to me his intention of setting out for America immediately, as a secret, which he desired I would mention to nobody. I complied with his request. If he did not think fit to communicate it to you also, it is from him you should demand his reasons.*

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* The contents of the letter, to which this is an answer, are so remarkable, and they are so pointedly alluded to in the answer itself, that, in justice to both parties, it seems proper that they should accompany each other. The following is Mr. Lee's letter.

"Chaillot, 2 April, 1778.

"SIR,

"It was with the utmost surprise, that I learned yesterday that M. Gérard was to set out in the evening for America, in a public character, and that Mr. Deane was to accompany him, without either you or he having condescended to answer my letter of the preceding day.

"That a measure of such moment, as M. Gérard's mission, should have been taken without any communication with the Commissioners is hardly credible. That, if it was communicated, you should do such violence to the authority that constituted us, together with so great an injury and injustice to me, is equally astonishing. If success to the mission, and unanimity on the subject in Congress, were your wish, with

This court has an undoubted right to send as ministers whom it pleases, and where it pleases, without advising with us, or desiring our approbation. The measure of sending M. Gérard as a minister to Congress was resolved on without consulting me; but I think it a wise one, and, if I did not, I do not conceive that I have any right to find fault with it. France was not consulted when we were sent here. Your angry charge, therefore, of our "making a party business of it," is groundless; we had no hand in the business. And, as we neither "acted nor advised" in it, which you suppose, your other high-sounding charge of our doing, thereby, violence to the authority that constituted us, and a great injury and injustice to you, is equally without foundation. As to the concealing it from you, reasons were given by Mr. Deane,

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what propriety could you make it a party business, and not unite all the Commissioners in the advising and approving a measure, in which you desired their friends and constituents might be unanimous?

"I do not live ten minutes' distance from you. The communication, therefore, could not be attended with delay or difficulty. Within these few days, I have seen you frequently, as usual. Particularly, on Monday I was with you at your house for some time. I asked you about the sailing of the ships at Nantes, expressing my desire to know when we should have an opportunity of writing. You said you did not know when they sailed. I asked if there were no letters, none but one from M. Dumas having been shown to me for some time. You answered, No. I had, at a former meeting, asked you whether it was not proper for us to send an express to give intelligence of such consequential events as our being acknowledged here, and the treaty avowed. You told me, it would be sufficient to write by the ship from Nantes, (for it was afterwards you mentioned there were two,) as the news being public would find its way fast enough.

"Upon M. Amiel, who came from your house to mine, mentioning, on Tuesday, that Mr. Deane was to go away in a few days, I wrote to you and him to repeat what I have so often requested, that the public accounts might be settled, for which Mr. Deane had taken possession of all the vouchers, and that the public papers might be delivered to us before his departure. You made no answer. I sent my secretary again yesterday to desire an answer. You sent me a verbal

that appeared to me satisfactory, and founded entirely on views of public good. I promise to communicate them to you hereafter, if you desire it, that you may have an opportunity of refuting them, if you can. At present, it is not proper.

Your third paragraph, therefore, containing a particular account of what passed between you and me at my house on Monday, seems not to require any answer. I am still of the same opinion, that, after having sent the treaties themselves by different good conveyances, in which treaties our public character was acknowledged in the most authentic manner, and the avowal of the transaction by the French ambassador

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one, that you would settle the accounts with me any day after to-morrow. Your reason for not doing it before was, that it was not your business. Now it seemed your business only, and Mr. Deane had no concern with it. The delivery of the public papers, which are the property of all, not of any one of the Commissioners, though you and Mr. Deane have constantly taken them to yourselves, was too immaterial to answer.

"During all this time, and with these circumstances, you have been totally silent to me about the present opportunity of writing to Congress, about the important public measure in agitation, and about Mr. Deane's departure. Nay, more, what you have said, and the manner in which you acted, tended to mislead me from imagining that you knew of any such thing Had you studied to deceive the most distrusted and dangerous enemy of the public, you could not have done it more effectually.

"I trust, Sir, that you will think with me, that I have a right to know your reasons for treating me thus. If you have any thing to accuse me of, avow it, and I will answer you. If you have not, why do you act so inconsistently with your duty to the public, and injuriously to me? Is the present state of Europe of so little moment to our constituents, as not to require our joint consideration, and information to them? Is the character of the court here, and of the person sent to negotiate with our constituents, of no consequence for them to be apprized of? Is this the example, you in your superior wisdom think proper to set, of order, decorum, confidence, and justice?

"I trust too, Sir, that you will not treat this letter, as you have done many others, with the indignity of not answering it. Though I have been silent, I have not felt the less the many affronts of this kind,

to the King of England, which was in all the papers of Europe, the sending a vessel express to carry the news of paying our respects to court, which was likewise in the papers, was an expensive and altogether unnecessary operation.

I received your letter directed to Mr. Deane and myself relating to the accounts. I had no opportunity of showing it to him till the evening of his departure, and then he was in too much of a hurry to peruse it. I could not, therefore, sooner answer it. But I then wrote an answer, acquainting you that he had put into my hands the public papers, with all the information he could give relating to the accounts. It was

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which you have thought proper to offer me. I have the honor to be, with great respect. "ARTHUR LEE."

When Mr. Lee wrote this letter he was ignorant of the cause of the complaint contained in the first part of it. Count de Vergennes had been informed, that intelligence had been communicated to England through the agency of Mr. Lee's secretary, which created an unfavorable suspicion. The facts are these. Mr. Lee sent his secretary to England, with the view of ascertaining the nature of the preparations, that were making to fit out a fleet at Portsmouth. This secretary betrayed his trust, and revealed certain particulars in London for stock-jobbing purposes. Mr. Lee dismissed him, as soon as his unfaithfulness was discovered. It was important, that the intention of sending M. Gérard as minister to the United States, and a fleet to America, under Count d'Estaing, should remain a secret as long as possible, that the British government might not take measures to counteract the objects for which they were designed. Count de Vergennes was apprehensive, that, if the intelligence were made known to Mr. Lee, it would get to the ears of the British ministry through the above suspected channel. He enjoined it, therefore, on Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane, not to mention the subject to their colleague. This injunction they were of course bound to observe. Whatever may have been the circumstances, however, there does not appear to have been any just grounds of suspicion against Mr. Lee, so far at least as his intentions were concerned. He was ardently devoted to the cause of his country, and friendly to the alliance between France and the United States. It is to be regretted, that his moderation, judgment, and prudence, were not equal to his zeal and patriotism.

intended to be transcribed fairly, and sent to you in the morning. Your secretary called for an answer before I had time to copy it. I had a good deal of company; and, thinking a verbal message might perhaps do as well and save the trouble, I desired him, with my compliments, to acquaint you, that I was ready to settle the account with you at any time you should think fit to appoint, except to-morrow, when I should be otherwise engaged. As this verbal message offended you, though I cannot conceive why, I now send you the letter. In it, I complain of your artful, and, I think I may call them, unjust insinuations. You give me fresh instances in the letter I am answering. You magnify your zeal to have the public accounts settled, and insinuate that Mr. Deane and I prevented it, he by "taking possession of all the vouchers," and both of us by taking constantly the public papers to ourselves, which are the property of all the Commissioners.

When this comes to be read in the Committee, for whom it seems to be calculated, rather than for me, who know the circumstances, what can they understand by it, but that you are the only careful, honest man of the three, and that we have some knavish reasons for keeping the accounts in the dark, and you from seeing the vouchers? But the truth is, the papers naturally came into Mr. Deane's hands and mine; first, as he was engaged in the purchasing of goods for the Congress before either you or I came into France; next, as somebody must keep the papers, and you were either on long journeys to Spain, to Vienna and Berlin, or had a commission to go and reside in Spain, which it was expected would soon be executed; whereas Mr. Deane and I lived, almost constantly, in the same house, either at Paris or Passy; you, separate from us; and we did most of the business.

Where then could the papers be so properly placed as with us, who had daily occasion to make use of them? I never knew, that you desired to have the keeping of them. You never were refused a paper, or the copy of a paper, that you desired.*

As to my not acquainting you with the opportunity of writing to Congress by Mr. Deane, we had lately wrote, and sent, by probably safe conveyances, all I knew of importance to write. I, therefore, did not propose, nor do I write any letter to the Committee

* Mr. Lee's complaints about the official papers, which accumulated in the hands of the Commissioners, did not cease with the departure of Mr. Deane. They continued long after Mr. Adams took the place of that Commissioner. For some time Mr. Adams lived in the same house with Dr. Franklin at Passy. To one of Mr. Lee's letters on this subject, Mr. Adams replied as follows.

"I have not asked Dr. Franklin's opinion concerning your proposal of a room in your house for the papers, and an hour to meet there, because I know it would be in vain; for I think it must appear to him more unequal still. It cannot be expected, that two should go to one, when it is as easy again for one to go to two; not to mention Dr. Franklin's age, his rank in the country, or his character in the world; nor that nine tenths of the public letters are constantly brought to this house, and will ever be carried where Dr. Franklin is. I will venture to make a proposition in my turn, in which I am very sincere; it is that you would join families with us. There is room enough in this house to accommodate us all. You shall take the apartments which belong to me at present, and I will content myself with the library room and the next to it. Appoint a room for business, any that you please, mine or another, a person to keep the papers, and certain hours to do business. This arrangement will save a large sum of money to the public, and, as it would give us a thousand opportunities of conversing together, which now we have not, and, by having but one place for our countrymen and others to go to, who have occasion to visit us, would greatly facilitate the public business. It would remove the reproach we lie under, of which I confess myself very much ashamed, of not being able to agree together, and would make the commission more respectable, if not in itself, yet in the estimation of the English, the French, and the American nations; and, I am sure, if we judge by the letters we receive, it wants to be made more respectable, at least in the eyes of many persons of this country."—*Passy, October 10th*, 1778.

by him, especially as in my opinion, considering the route he was to take, he would not arrive so soon as other vessels, which may sail long after him. And he could himself give as good an account of our being at court, the only public transaction since our last letters, as we could write.

You ask me, why I act so inconsistently with my duty to the public? This is a heavy charge, Sir, which I have not deserved. But it is to the public, that I am accountable, and not to you. I have been a servant to many publics, through a long life; have served them with fidelity, and have been honored by their approbation. There is not a single instance of my ever being accused before of acting contrary to their interest or my duty. I shall account to the Congress, when called upon, for this my terrible offence of being silent to you about Mr. Deane's and M. Gérard's departure. And I have no doubt of their equity in acquitting me.

It is true, that I have omitted answering some of your letters, particularly your angry ones, in which you, with very magisterial airs, schooled and documented me, as if I had been one of your domestics. I saw in the strongest light the importance of our living in decent civility towards each other, while our great affairs were depending here. I saw your jealous, suspicious, malignant, and quarrelsome temper, which was daily manifesting itself against Mr. Deane and almost every other person you had any concern with. I, therefore, passed your affronts in silence, did not answer, but burnt your angry letters, and received you, when I next saw you, with the same civility, as if you had never wrote them. Perhaps I may still pursue the same conduct, and not send you these. I believe I shall not, unless exceedingly pressed by you; for, of all things, I hate altercation.

One word more about the accounts. You tell me, that my reason for not settling the accounts before, was, that it was not my business; now, it seemed my business only, and Mr. Deane had nothing to do with it. Both these positions are imaginary. I could never have given any such reasons, being always willing to settle accounts with everybody, and not having the least motive to delay or postpone the settlement of these. Nor could it seem, that I should say Mr. Deane had nothing to do with it. He had done what he could towards it, and, being actually gone, could do no more. The infinity of business we have had is the true and only reason, that I know of, why they have not been settled, that is, why we did not meet, sit down, and compare the vouchers with the articles in the banker's account, in order to see that his charges were supported, and that he had given us due credit for the moneys we had put into his hands. This, I apprehend, is all we have to do here. It is to the Congress we are separately to account for the separate drafts we have made on him. This, Mr. Deane can do, when he arrives, having taken a copy of the account with him.

If you think we should account to one another for our expenses, I have no objection, though I never expected it. I believe they will be found very moderate. I answer mine will, having had only the necessaries of life, and purchased nothing besides, except the *Encyclopædia*, nor sent a sixpence' worth of any thing to my friends or family in America. I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Passy, 6 April, 1778.

SIR,

Mr. Williams had orders from Mr. Deane and myself to purchase and make up a large quantity of clothing, and ship the same in pursuance of the orders of Congress. I imagine you were not in France, when this measure was taken, and so could not be consulted. But you certainly have been acquainted with it since your return. I never heard, that you made any objection to it, and you may at any time have fuller information if desired. I think the orders of any two of us, in these cases, are sufficient, and that, if we have given directions to an agent of ours to draw on our banker in discharge of contracts made properly for the public service, his drafts ought to be honored. The reason of permitting him to draw on our banker, instead of ourselves, was, as I understand it, convenient at that time, to mask more effectually our building and equipping vessels of force. If, in a single instance, he is known or suspected to have abused this confidence placed in him, I am ready to join with you in putting a stop to his proceedings by ordering his bills to be protested. If not, I think the public service requires, that he should complete his orders, which, as far as I have ever heard, he has hitherto executed with great care, fidelity, and ability.

As to the want of funds with Mr. Grand, I suppose, that, before the bills drawn on him become due, which are charged in his account, and bring the balance against us, he will be fully supplied with what are necessary.

I send you herewith sundry letters relating to our

affairs, for your perusal and advice upon them. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.*

Passy, 16 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I wish you would assure our friend, that Dr. Franklin never gave any such expectations to Mr. Pulteney. On the contrary, he told him, that the Commissioners could not succeed in their mission, whether they went to recover the *dependence* or to *divide*. His opinion is confirmed by the enclosed resolves, which perhaps it may not be amiss to publish in England. Please to send me the newspaper. Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* Edward Bancroft was an American by birth, but settled as a physician in London, where he had formerly known Dr. Franklin. In the instructions given by the *Committee of Secret Correspondence* to Silas Deane, when he went to France as an agent from Congress, they say to him; "You will endeavour to procure a meeting with Dr. Bancroft by writing a letter to him, under cover to Mr. Griffiths, at Turnham Green, near London, and desiring him to come over to you, in France or Holland, on the score of old acquaintance. From him you may obtain a good deal of information of what is now going forward in England, and settle a mode of continuing a correspondence. It may be well to remit him a small bill to defray his expenses in coming to you, and avoid all political matters in your letter to him." Accordingly Dr. Bancroft went to Paris, soon after Deane arrived there, and remained several months. He then returned to London, and, being attached to the interests of the United States, he rendered some valuable services to the American agents and ministers in Europe. He was already favorably known by his scientific attainments, being a Fellow of the Royal Society, and author of a work of considerable repute, entitled "An Essay on the Natural History of Guiana."

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 23 April, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I will take care of all your commissions. This moment a second packet of infinite value is received, which I shall cherish as a mark of affection from you. I opened the letter by mistake, which came with it, and soon saw it was not for me. I hope you will excuse it. I choose rather to throw myself upon your goodness for the excuse, than any thing else. I shall not set out till between one and two; therefore, if you will be so good as to send me another copy, I will take care of it, and deliver it safely.

God bless you, my dear friend. No exertion or endeavour on my part shall be wanting, that we may some time or other meet again in peace. Your powers are infinitely more influential than mine. To those powers I trust my last hopes. I will conclude, "Blessed are the peace-makers." Your affectionate friend,

D. Hartley.*

P. S. If tempestuous times should come, take care of your own safety; events are uncertain, and men may be capricious.

DR. FRANKLIN'S ANSWER.

I thank you for your kind caution, but having nearly finished a long life, I set but little value on what remains of it. Like a draper, when one chaffers with him for a remnant, I am ready to say, "As it is only

* Mr. Hartley was in Paris, on a secret mission from the British ministry, with propositions for a peace, which Dr. Franklin did not approve.

the fag end, I will not differ with you about it; take it for what you please." Perhaps the best use such an old fellow can be put to, is to make a martyr of him.

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Giving an Account of his Conversations with Mr. Hartley and Mr. Chapman respecting Propositions for Peace.

Passy, 24 April, 1778.

SIR,

Mr. Hartley, a member of Parliament, an old acquaintance of mine, arrived here from London on Sunday last. He is generally in the opposition, especially on American questions, but has some respect for Lord North. In conversation, he expressed the strongest anxiety for peace with America, and appeared extremely desirous to know my sentiments of the terms, which might probably be acceptable if offered; whether America would not, to obtain peace, grant some superior advantages in trade to Britain, and enter into an al-

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* After Mr. Hartley returned to London, a friend of Dr. Franklin received an anonymous letter in cipher, dated May 15th, containing a caution to him to be on his guard from another quarter. The writer said; "Mr. Hartley told Lord Camden this morning, that he was sure the Commissioners, and particularly Dr. Franklin, were much disconcerted at Paris; for they might as well live in the Bastile, as be exposed, as they were, to the perpetual observation of French ministerial spies. This must not, however, be repeated."

In reply, Dr. Franklin said; "Be so good as to answer our friend, that it is impossible Mr. Hartley could have said what is here represented, no such thing having ever been intimated to him; nor has the least idea of the kind ever been in the minds of the Commissioners, particularly Dr. Franklin, who does not care how many spies are placed about him by the court of France, having nothing to conceal from them."

liance, offensive and defensive; whether, if war should be declared against France, we had obliged ourselves by treaty to join with her against England.

My answers have been, that the United States were not fond of war, and with the advice of their friends would probably be easily prevailed with to make peace on equitable terms; but we had no terms committed to us to propose, and I did not choose to mention any; that Britain, having injured us heavily by making this unjust war upon us, might think herself well off, if *on reparation of those injuries* we admitted her to *equal* advantages with other nations in commerce; but certainly she had no reason to expect *superior;* that her known fondness for war, and the many instances of her readiness to engage in wars on frivolous occasions, were probably sufficient to cause an immediate rejection of every proposition for an *offensive* alliance with her; and that, if she made war against France on our account, a peace with us, at the same time, was impossible; for that, having met with friendship from that generous nation, when we were cruelly oppressed by England, we were under ties stronger than treaties could form, to make common cause; which we should certainly do to the utmost of our power.

Here has also been with me a Mr. Chapman, who says he is a member of the Parliament of Ireland, on his way home from Nice, where he had been for the recovery of his health. He pretended to call on me only from motives of respect for my character, &c. But, after a few compliments, he entered on a similar discourse, urging much to know what terms would satisfy America, and whether, on having *peace and independence granted* to us, we should not be willing to submit to the Navigation Act, or give equivalent privileges in trade to Britain. The purport of my answer

to him was, in short, that peace was of equal value to England as to us, and independence we were already in possession of; that, therefore, England's offer to grant them to us could not be considered as proposing any favor, or as giving her a right to expect peculiar advantages in commerce. By his importunity, I found his visit was not so occasional as he represented it; and, from some expressions, I conjectured he might be sent by Lord Shelburne to sound me, and collect some information. On the whole, I gather from these conversations, that the opposition, as well as the ministry, are perplexed with the present situation of affairs, and know not which way to turn themselves, or whether it is best to go backward or forward, or what steps to take to extricate that nation from its present dangerous situation.

I thought it right to give your Excellency an account of these interviews, and to acquaint you with my intention of avoiding such hereafter; as I see but little prospect of utility in them, and think they are very liable to hurtful misrepresentations.

By advices from London we learn, that a fleet for Quebec, with goods valued at five hundred thousand pounds sterling, is to sail about the end of this month, under convoy only of a single frigate of thirty guns, in which is to go Governor Haldimand.

Enclosed I send a paper I have just received from London. It is not subscribed by any name, but I know the hand. It is from an old friend, of general and great acquaintance, and marks strongly the present distress and despair of considerate people in England. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Policy of the British Ministry to excite Divisions and Distrust.

Translation.

Versailles, 25 April, 1778.

SIR,

I have made known to the King the substance of the letter, which you did me the honor of writing to me yesterday; and I am directed by his Majesty to express to you the satisfaction he has experienced from the information, which you have communicated on your conferences with Mr. Hartley. The grand principle of the English policy has always been to excite divisions; and it is by such means she expects to sustain her empire; but it is not upon you, nor upon your colleagues, that she can practise such arts with success.

I entertain the same sentiments of confidence in the United States. As to the rest, it is impossible to speak with more dignity, frankness, and firmness than you have done to Mr. Hartley; he has no reason to be very well satisfied with his mission. I doubt whether this member of Parliament has any mission for us; but he desires to see me, and I expect him in the course of the morning. I should not be at all surprised, if his purpose be to sow distrust between us, by proposing a double negotiation. That I can obviate; but whatever passes between us, however trifling it may be, you shall be made acquainted with. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect consideration, SIR, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Mode of drawing Money from the Hands of the American Banker.

Passy, 17 May, 1778.

Mr. Franklin is not inclined to sign this letter to Mr. Grand;*

1. Because he does not know, that any inconveniences have arisen from the order originally given, that the orders of each of us separately should be honored.

2. Because Mr. Lee is pleased to be very angry with him, which is expressed in many of his letters, and therefore Mr. Franklin does not choose to be obliged to ask Mr. Lee's consent, whenever he may have occasion to draw for his subsistence, as that consent cannot be expected from any necessity of a reciprocal compliance on Mr. Franklin's part, Mr. Lee having secured his subsistence by taking into his own possession one hundred and eighty-five thousand livres, and his brother, by a deception on the Commissioners, of forty-eight thousand.† Mr. Franklin has no objection to any resolution, that all contracts for the public shall be made by joint consent, or at least by a majority, together with the drafts for payment. Indeed, he wishes, that, if practicable, he might be excused

* The following is a copy of the letter to Mr. Grand, the American banker, which Mr. Lee requested Dr. Franklin to sign.

"Sir; It is our desire, that you accept no bills nor pay any money out of the funds, which are or may be in your hands to the credit of us three jointly, without our joint order. As it has been the practice to address letters upon the business of the Commission to Mr. Deane, we desire, that you will send to us all the letters you receive so directed, and not give them to any private person."

† This "deception," as it is here called, is explained in the letter to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, dated January 15th, 1779.

from any concern in matters of commerce, which he so little understands. But, as we are separately accountable to Congress for our personal expenses, and Mr. Franklin does not desire to have the least control in those of his colleagues, so neither does he choose to subject his to the control of Mr. Lee.

3. He declines signing this letter, because it orders Mr. Grand to deliver to us all letters directed to Mr. Deane, which may come into his hands; and, it being understood that Dr. Bancroft is intrusted and empowered by Mr. Deane to receive his letters, and there may be some concerning his private affairs, with which we have no concern, and which it may be improper for us to examine, Mr. Franklin thinks, that the supposition of a possibility, that they may relate to the public, is not sufficient excuse for such gratification of private curiosity. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, 27 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 18th, enclosing one for the Countess of Selkirk, which I forward this day by way of Holland, as you desire. It is a gallant letter, and must give her Ladyship a high and just opinion of your generosity and nobleness of mind.

The Jersey privateers do us a great deal of mischief by intercepting our supplies. It has been mentioned to me, that your small vessel, commanded by so brave an officer, might render great service by following them where greater ships dare not venture their bottoms; or, being accompanied and supported by some frigates from Brest, at a proper distance, might draw

them out, and then take them. I wish you to consider of this, as it comes from high authority, and that you would immediately let me know what you think of it, and when your ship will be ready.

I have written to England about the exchange of your prisoners. I congratulate you most cordially on your late success, and wish for a continuance and increase of the honor you have acquired. It will always be a pleasure to me to contribute what may lie in my power towards your advancement, and that of the brave officers and men under your command. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Proposal to take Command of a Ship.

Passy, 1 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure of informing you, that it is proposed to give you the command of the great ship we have built at Amsterdam. By what you wrote to us formerly, I have ventured to say in your behalf, that this proposition would be agreeable to you. You will immediately let me know your resolution; which, that you may be more clear in taking, I must inform you of some circumstances. She is at present the property of the King; but, as there is no war yet declared, you will have the commission and flag of the United States, and act under their orders and laws. The *Prince de Nassau* will make the cruise with you. She is to be brought here under cover as a French merchantman, to be equipped and manned in France. We hope to exchange your prisoners for as many American sailors; but, if that fails, you have your

present crew to be made up here with other nations and French.

The other Commissioners are not acquainted with this proposition as yet, and you see, by the nature of it, that it is necessary to be kept a secret, till we have got the vessel here, for fear of difficulties in Holland, and interruption. You will therefore direct your answer to me alone, it being desired, that, at present, the affair rest between you and me. Perhaps it may be best for you to take a trip up here to concert matters, if in general you approve the idea.

I was much pleased with reading your journal, which we received yesterday. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Intelligence and Instructions respecting the Command of a Frigate.

Passy, 10 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 1st instant with the papers enclosed, which I have shown to the other Commissioners; but have not yet had their opinion of them. I only know, that they had before (in consideration of the disposition and uneasiness of your people) expressed an inclination to order your ship directly back to America. You will judge from what follows, whether it would not be advisable *for you to propose* their sending her back with her people, and under some other command.

In consequence of the high opinion the minister of the marine has of your conduct and bravery, it is now settled (observe, that this is to be a secret between us, I being expressly enjoined not to communicate it

to any other person, not even to the other gentlemen,) that you are to have the frigate from Holland, which actually belongs to government, and will be furnished with as many good French seamen as you shall require. But you are to act under Congress' commission. As you may like to have a number of Americans, and your own are homesick, it is proposed to give you as many as you can engage out of two hundred prisoners, which the ministry of Britain have at length agreed to give us in exchange for those you have in your hands. They propose to make the exchange at Calais, where they are to bring the Americans. Nothing is wanting to this, but a list of yours, containing their names and rank; immediately on the receipt of which, an equal number are to be prepared and sent in a ship to that port, where yours are to meet them. Pray send this list by the return of the post if possible. If by this means you can get a good new crew, I think it will be best that you are quite free of the old, for a mixture might introduce the infection of that sickness you complain of. But this may be left to your discretion.

Perhaps we shall join with you the *Providence*, Captain Whipple, a new Continental ship of thirty guns, which, in coming out of the river of Providence, gave the two frigates that were posted to intercept her each of them so heavy a dose of her eighteen and twelve pounders, that they had not the courage, or were not able, to pursue her. The *Boston* is supposed to be gone from Bordeaux.

It seems to be desired, that you should step up to Versailles, (where one will meet you,) in order to such a settlement of matters and plans with those who have the direction, as cannot well be done by letter. I wish it may be convenient to you to do it directly.

The project of giving you the command of this ship pleases me the more, as it is a probable opening to the higher preferment you so justly merit. I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO JAMES HUTTON.

Passy, 23 June, 1778.

My dear old friend has here the paper he desired.* We have had a marble monument made at Paris for the brave General Montgomery, which is gone to America. If it should fall into the hands of any of your cruisers, I expect you will exert yourself to get it restored to us, because I know the generosity of your temper, which likes to do handsome things, as well as to make returns. You see we are unwilling to *rob the hospital;* we hope your people will be found as averse to *pillaging the dead.* Adieu. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO AN ENGRAVER IN PARIS.

Respecting a Print commemorative of American Independence.

Passy, 24 June, 1778.

SIR,

On reading again the prospectus and explanation of your intended print, I find the whole merit of giving freedom to America continues to be ascribed to me, which, as I told you in our first conversation, I could by no means approve of, as it would be unjust to

* Passport for a vessel, which was about to be sent to the Moravian missionaries on the coast of Labrador. See Vol. V. p. 122.

the numbers of wise and brave men, who, by their arms and counsels, have shared in the enterprise, and contributed to its success (as far as it has yet succeeded) at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

My proposition to you was, and continues to be, that, instead of naming me in particular in the explanation of the print, it should be said, "*The Congress, represented by a Senator in Roman dress, &c.*" As it stands, I cannot consent to accept the honor you propose to do me by dedicating the print to me, which, I understand, is in this country considered as an approbation; and in my own country it would hurt my character and usefulness, if I were to give the least countenance to such a pretension, by recommending or proposing the sale of a print so explained. Upon these considerations I must request, that, if you are determined to proceed in the engraving, you would, in a new prospectus, change the explanation as above proposed, and dedicate the print not to me, but to the Congress. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES DE WEISSENSTEIN.*

Reply to Insinuations against the good Faith of France. — Future Prospects of America. — The King's political Studies. — Peace is to be obtained only on equal Terms. — Offer of Rewards ridiculed.

Passy, 1 July, 1778.

SIR,

I received your letter, dated at Brussels the 16th past. My vanity might possibly be flattered by your

* Dr. Franklin received a long letter from a man, who signed himself *Charles de Weissenstein*. The letter was dated, "Brussels, June

expressions of compliment to my understanding, if your *proposals* did not more clearly manifest a mean opinion of it.

You conjure me, in the name of the omniscient and just God, before whom I must appear, and by my hopes of future fame, to consider if some expedient cannot be found to put a stop to the desolation of America, and prevent the miseries of a general war. As I am conscious of having taken every step in my power to prevent the breach, and no one to widen

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16th, 1778," and written in English. The writer was evidently a secret agent from England, instructed to procure from Dr. Franklin some kind of propositions for a peace. The name was doubtless assumed, and although the letter was dated at Brussels, it was probably written in Paris.

The contents of the letter, considering the source in which it must have originated, are curious and remarkable. The writer begins by urging the impossibility, that England should ever acknowledge the independence of the colonies, and the certainty that France would deceive and betray them. He moreover adds, that, in case Parliament should be induced to acknowledge their independence, the people of England would not approve it, and posterity would never submit to it. "Our title to the empire," said he, "is indisputable; it will be asserted, either by ourselves or successors, whenever occasion presents. We may stop awhile in our pursuit to recover breath, but shall assuredly resume our career again."

He then proceeds at much length to state a *Plan of Reconciliation*; and the *Outlines of the Future Government in America*. In the Plan is the following extraordinary article. "As the conspicuous public part, which some American gentlemen have taken, may expose them to the personal enmity of some of the chief persons in Great Britain, and as it is unreasonable that their services to their country should deprive them of those advantages, which their talents would otherwise have gained them, the following persons shall have *offices*, or *pensions for life*, at their option, namely, Franklin, Washington, Adams, Hancock, &c. &c. In case his Majesty, or his successors, should ever create American peers, then these persons or their descendants shall be among the first created, if they choose it; Mr. Washington to have immediately a brevet of Lieutenant-general, and all the honors and precedence incident thereto but not to assume or bear any command without a special warrant, or letter of service, for that purpose, from the King."

In the *Outlines of Government* it is provided, that each colony shall choose its own form, and have legislatures, but that all officers must

it, I can appear cheerfully before that God, fearing nothing from his justice in this particular, though I have much occasion for his mercy in many others. As to my future fame, I am content to rest it on my past and present conduct, without seeking an addition to it in the crooked, dark paths, you propose to me, where I should most certainly lose it. This your solemn address would therefore have been more properly made to your sovereign and his venal Parliament. He and they, who wickedly began, and madly continue, a war for the desolation of America, are alone accountable for the consequences.

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swear allegiance to the crown and Parliament of Great Britain; that no American shall enjoy any office of trust or profit in Great Britain, without a special act of Parliament for that purpose; in every other respect they are to enjoy the privileges of natural born Englishmen; that "the judges of the courts shall be named by the King, and hold their offices for life, and shall either bear titles as peers of America, or otherwise, as shall be decided by his Majesty; that a Congress shall assemble once in seven years, or oftener, if his Majesty thinks fit to summon it, but all its proceedings are to be transmitted to the British Parliament, without whose consent no money shall ever be granted by Congress or any separate state to the crown; that the great offices of state shall be named in the compact, and that America shall provide for them; that the whole naval and military force shall be directed by his Majesty; that the British Parliament shall fix the naval and military force, and vote the sums necessary for its maintenance, both by sea and land, and make laws for its regulation; that a tariff of duties shall be fixed, which shall not be changed without the mutual consent of both the Parliament of Great Britain and the colony where the change is intended to be made; that British manufactures shall always have the preference over those of other nations, and that no new taxes shall ever be imposed on them, without the previous consent of the Parliament of Great Britain."

Such are some of the features of the scheme proposed by this private agent. Dr. Franklin understood it to proceed from high authority, and framed his answer accordingly. He sent the agent's letter to Count de Vergennes, with a copy of his answer. They are now in the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères* in Paris, where the above abstract was taken from the original, and where also a copy of Dr. Franklin's answer was obtained.

You endeavour to impress me with a bad opinion of French faith; but the instances of their friendly endeavours to serve a race of weak princes, who, by their own imprudence, defeated every attempt to promote their interest, weigh but little with me, when I consider the steady friendship of France to the Thirteen United States of Switzerland, which has now continued inviolate two hundred years. You tell me, that she will certainly cheat us, and that she despises us already. I do not believe that she will cheat us, and I am not certain that she despises us; but I see clearly that you are endeavouring to cheat us by your conciliatory bills; that you actually despised our understandings, when you flattered yourselves those artifices would succeed; and that not only France, but all Europe, yourselves included, most certainly and for ever would despise us, if we were weak enough to accept your insidious propositions.

Our expectations of the future grandeur of America are not so magnificent, and therefore not so vain or visionary, as you represent them to be. The body of our people are not merchants, but humble husbandmen, who delight in the cultivation of their lands, which, from their fertility and the variety of our climates, are capable of furnishing all the necessaries and conveniences of life without external commerce; and we have too much land to have the least temptation to extend our territory by conquest from peaceable neighbours, as well as too much justice to think of it. Our militia, you find by experience, are sufficient to defend our lands from invasion; and the commerce with us will be defended by all the nations who find an advantage in it. We, therefore, have not the occasion you imagine, of fleets or standing armies, but may leave those expensive machines to be maintained for the pomp of

princes, and the wealth of ancient states. We propose, if possible, to live in peace with all mankind; and after you have been convinced, to your cost, that there is nothing to be got by attacking us, we have reason to hope, that no other power will judge it prudent to quarrel with us, lest they divert us from our own quiet industry, and turn us into corsairs preying upon theirs. The weight therefore of an independent empire, which you seem certain of our inability to bear, will not be so great as you imagine. The expense of our civil government we have always borne, and can easily bear, because it is small. A virtuous and laborious people may be cheaply governed. Determining, as we do, to have no offices of profit, nor any sinecures or useless appointments, so common in ancient or corrupted states, we can govern ourselves a year, for the sum you pay in a single department, or for what one jobbing contractor, by the favor of a minister, can cheat you out of in a single article.

You think we flatter ourselves, and are deceived into an opinion that England *must* acknowledge our independency. We, on the other hand, think you flatter yourselves in imagining such an acknowledgment a vast boon, which we strongly desire, and which you may gain some great advantage by granting or withholding. We have never asked it of you; we only tell you, that you can have no treaty with us but as an independent state; and you may please yourselves and your children with the rattle of your right to govern us, as long as you have done with that of your King's being King of France, without giving us the least concern, if you do not attempt to exercise it. That this pretended right is indisputable, as you say, we utterly deny. Your Parliament never had a right to govern us, and your King has forfeited it by his

bloody tyranny. But I thank you for letting me know a little of your mind, that, even if the Parliament should acknowledge our independency, the act would not be binding to posterity, and that your nation would resume and prosecute the claim as soon as they found it convenient from the influence of your passions, and your present malice against us. We suspected before, that you would not be actually bound by your conciliatory acts, longer than till they had served their purpose of inducing us to disband our forces; but we were not certain, that you were knaves by principle, and that we ought not to have the least confidence in your offers, promises, or treaties, though confirmed by Parliament.

I now indeed recollect my being informed, long since, when in England, that a certain very great personage, then young, studied much a certain book, called *Arcana Imperii*. I had the curiosity to procure the book and read it. There are sensible and good things in it, but some bad ones; for, if I remember rightly, a particular king is applauded for his politically exciting a rebellion among his subjects, at a time when they had not strength to support it, that he might, in subduing them, take away their privileges, which were troublesome to him; and a question is formally stated and discussed, *Whether a prince, who, to appease a revolt, makes promises of indemnity to the revolters, is obliged to fulfil those promises.* Honest and good men would say, Ay; but this politician says, as you say, No. And he gives this pretty reason, that, though it was right to make the promises, because otherwise the revolt would not be suppressed, yet it would be wrong to keep them, because revolters ought to be punished to deter from future revolts.

If these are the principles of your nation, no con

fidence can be placed in you; it is in vain to treat with you; and the wars can only end in being reduced to an utter inability of continuing them.

One main drift of your letter seems to be, to impress me with an idea of your own impartiality, by just censures of your ministers and measures, and to draw from me propositions of peace, or approbations of those you have enclosed to me, which you intimate may by your means be conveyed to the King directly, without the intervention of those ministers. You would have me give them to, or drop them for, a stranger, whom I may find next Monday in the church of Notre Dame, to be known by a rose in his hat. You yourself, Sir, are quite unknown to me; you have not trusted me with your true name. Our taking the least step towards a treaty with England through you, might, if you are an enemy, be made use of to ruin us with our new and good friends. I may be indiscreet enough in many things; but certainly, if I were disposed to make propositions (which I cannot do, having none committed to me to make), I should never think of delivering them to the Lord knows who, to be carried to the Lord knows where, to serve no one knows what purposes. Being at this time one of the most remarkable figures in Paris, even my appearance in the church of Notre Dame, where I cannot have any conceivable business, and especially being seen to leave or drop any letter to any person there, would be a matter of some speculation, and might, from the suspicions it must naturally give, have very mischievous consequences to our credit here.

The very proposing of a correspondence so to be managed, in a manner not necessary where fair dealing is intended, gives just reason to suppose you intend the contrary. Besides, as your court has sent Com-

missioners to treat with the Congress, with all the powers that could be given them by the crown under the act of Parliament, what good purpose can be served by privately obtaining propositions from us? Before those Commissioners went, we might have treated in virtue of our general powers, (with the knowledge, advice, and approbation of our friends), upon any propositions made to us. But, under the present circumstances, for us to make propositions, while a treaty is supposed to be actually on foot with the Congress, would be extremely improper, highly presumptuous with regard to our constituents, and answer no good end whatever.

I write this letter to you, notwithstanding; (which I think I can convey in a less mysterious manner, and guess it may come to your hands;) I write it because I would let you know our sense of your procedure, which appears as insidious as that of your conciliatory bills. Your true way to obtain peace, if your ministers desire it, is, to propose openly to the Congress fair and equal terms, and you may possibly come sooner to such a resolution, when you find, that personal flatteries, general cajolings, and panegyrics on our *virtue* and *wisdom* are not likely to have the effect you seem to expect; the persuading us to act basely and foolishly, in betraying our country and posterity into the hands of our most bitter enemies, giving up or selling our arms and warlike stores, dismissing our ships of war and troops, and putting those enemies in possession of our forts and ports.

This proposition of delivering ourselves, bound and gagged, ready for hanging, without even a right to complain, and without a friend to be found afterwards among all mankind, you would have us embrace upon the faith of an act of Parliament! Good God! an act

of your Parliament! This demonstrates that you do not yet know us, and that you fancy we do not know you; but it is not merely this flimsy faith, that we are to act upon; you offer us *hope*, the hope of PLACES, PENSIONS, and PEERAGES. These, judging from yourselves, you think are motives irresistible. This offer to corrupt us, Sir, is with me your credential, and convinces me that you are not a private volunteer in your application. It bears the stamp of British court character. It is even the signature of your King. But think for a moment in what light it must be viewed in America. By PLACES, you mean places among us, for you take care by a special article to secure your own to yourselves. We must then pay the salaries in order to enrich ourselves with these places. But you will give us PENSIONS, probably to be paid too out of your expected American revenue, and which none of us can accept without deserving, and perhaps obtaining, a SUS-*pension*. PEERAGES! alas! Sir, our long observation of the vast servile majority of your peers, voting constantly for every measure proposed by a minister, however weak or wicked, leaves us small respect for that title. We consider it as a sort of *tar-and-feather* honor, or a mixture of foulness and folly, which every man among us, who should accept it from your King, would be obliged to renounce, or exchange for that conferred by the mobs of their own country, or wear it with everlasting infamy. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM RAWLINS LOWNDES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Commodore Gillon commissioned to procure Ships of War in Europe for the State of South Carolina.

Charleston, 18 July, 1778

Sir,

The State of South Carolina, having resolved to procure three ships of war in foreign parts for the protection of their coast and trade, have intrusted that service to their Commodore, Alexander Gillon, a zealous and approved friend to the American States, who embarks for France with some other officers to manage that business.

The legislature have appropriated to this use the sum of five hundred thousand pounds currency; and goods and effects purchased here to that amount have been partly exported, and the remainder will soon be exported to France. But it is feared, that the danger of capture, the heavy charge on shipping, and the loss on the sale of our produce, will reduce the net proceeds in France considerably below the sum wanted. To guard against the disappointment that would be occasioned by these consequences, Mr. Gillon is furnished with the proper credentials to enable him, on the faith and credit of this country, to negotiate a loan in Europe sufficient to make up any deficiency that may happen in the sum granted, that he may as soon as possible carry into effect the intention of the State in procuring the said armament.

I am, therefore, in behalf of the State of South Carolina, to request the favor of your assistance and countenance to Mr. Gillon, to give weight and success to his application in a measure so interesting and of such public utility to the United States in general, and to

this in particular. For which purpose I take the liberty of introducing him to your patronage and protection, and am, with the greatest respect and regard, Sir, &c. RAWLINS LOWNDES.*

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Proceedings relative to Mr. Deane. — Beaumarchais. — Inconvenience of maintaining several Commissioners in Europe. — War between England and France. — Difficulty of raising Loans.

Passy, 22 July, 1778.

SIR,

I received your favor of May 15th, and was glad to find, that mine of December 25th had come to hand. Mr. Deane's brother writes it was not signed, which was an accidental omission. Mr. Deane is himself I hope with you long before this time, and I doubt not every prejudice against him is removed. It was not alone upon the proceedings of Congress, that I formed my opinion that such prejudices existed. I am glad to understand that opinion was groundless, and that he is likely to come back with honor in the commission to Holland, where matters are already so ripe for his operations, that he cannot fail (with his abilities) of being useful.

You mention former letters of the Committee, by which we might have seen the apprehensions of the resentment of foreign officers, &c. Those letters never came to hand. And we, on our part, are amazed to hear, that the Committee had had no line from us for near a year, during which we had written, I believe,

* Mr. Lowndes was at this time Governor of South Carolina.

five or six long and particular letters, and had made it a rule to send triplicates of each, and to replace those that we happened to hear were lost, so that of some there were five copies sent; and, as I hear that Captain Young is arrived, who had some of them, I think it probable that one of each, at least, must have come to your hands before this time. Mr. Deane's information, however, may supply the want of them, whose arrival, as he went with a strong squadron of men-of-war, is more likely than that of this vessel, or any other single one by which we might send more copies.

The affair with M. de Beaumarchais will be best settled by his assistance after his return. We find it recommended to us, but we know too little of it to be able to do it well without him.

There has been some inaccuracy in sending us the ast despatches of the Committee. Two copies of the contract with M. Francy, and the invoices, came by the same vessel, Captain Niles. And though one of your letters mentions sending enclosed a resolution of Congress relative to two articles of the treaty, that resolution is not come to hand. There are circumstances in the affair of those articles, that make them, in my opinion, of no consequence if they stand, while the proposing to abrogate them has an unpleasing appearance, as it looks like a desire of having it in our power to make that commercial kind of war, which no honest State can begin, which no good friend or neighbour ever did or will begin, which has always been considered as an act of hostility, that provoked as well as justified reprisals, and has generally produced such as rendered the first project as unprofitable as it was unjust.

Commerce among nations, as well as between pri-

vate persons, should be fair and equitable, by equivalent exchanges and mutual supplies. The taking unfair advantages of a neighbour's necessities, though attended with temporary success, always breeds bad blood. To lay duties on a commodity exported, which our neighbours want, is a knavish attempt to get something for nothing. The statesman who first invented it had the genius of a pickpocket, and would have been a pickpocket if fortune had suitably placed him. The nations, who have practised it, have suffered fourfold, as pickpockets ought to suffer. Savoy, by a duty on exported wines, lost the trade of Switzerland, which thenceforth raised its own wine; and (to wave other instances) Britain, by her duty on exported tea, has lost the trade of her colonies. But, as we produce no commodity that is peculiar to our country, and which may not be obtained elsewhere, the discouraging the consumption of ours by duties on exportation, and thereby encouraging a rivalship from other nations in the ports we trade to, is absolute folly, which indeed is mixed more or less with all knavery. For my own part, if my protest were of any consequence, I should protest against our ever doing it, even by way of reprisal. It is a meanness with which I would not dirty the conscience or character of my country.

The objections, stated against the last of the two articles, had all been made and considered here; and were sent, I imagine, from hence, by one who is offended, that they were not thought of weight sufficient to stop the signing of the treaty, till the King should, in another council, reconsider those articles, and, after agreeing to omit them, order new copies to be drawn, though all was then ready engrossed on parchment as before settled. I did not think the articles of much consequence; but I thought it of consequence, that no

delay should be given to the signing of the treaty after it was ready. But, if I had known that those objections would have been sent to the Committee, I should have sent the answers they received, which had been satisfactory to *all* the Commissioners, when the treaty was settled, and until the mind of one* of them was altered by the opinion of two other persons.† It is now too late to send those answers. But I wish, for the future, if such a case should again happen, that Congress would acquaint their Commissioners with such partial objections, and hear their reasons before they determine that they have done wrong. In the mean time this only to you in private; it will be of no use to communicate it, as the resolutions of Congress will probably be received and executed before this letter comes to hand.

Speaking of Commissioners in the plural, puts me in mind of inquiring, if it can be the intention of Congress to keep *three* Commissioners at this court; we have indeed four with the gentleman intended for Tuscany, who continues here, and is very angry that he was not consulted in making the treaty, which he could have mended in several particulars; and perhaps he is angry with some reason, if the instructions to him do, as he says they do, require us to consult him. We shall soon have the fifth; for the envoy to Vienna, not being received there, is, I hear, returning hither. The necessary expense of maintaining us all is, I assure you, enormously great. I wish that the utility may equal it. I imagine every one of us spends nearly as much as Lord Stormont did. It is true, he left behind him the character of a niggard; and, when the advertisement appeared for the sale of his house-

* Arthur Lee. — See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 127.

† Ralph Izard and William Lee. — *Ibid.* p. 372.

hold goods, all Paris laughed at an article of it, perhaps very innocently expressed, "*Une grande quantité du linge de table, qui n'a jamais servi.*" "*Cela est très vraisemblable,*" say they, "*car il n'a jamais donné à manger.*"

But, as to our number, whatever advantage there might be in the joint counsels of three for framing and adjusting the articles of the treaty, there can be none in managing the common business of a resident here. On the contrary, all the advantages in negotiation that result from secrecy of sentiment, and uniformity in expressing it, and in common business from despatch, are lost. In a court, too, where every word is watched and weighed, if a number of Commissioners do not every one hold the same language, in giving their opinion on any public transaction, this lessens their weight; and when it may be prudent to put on, or avoid certain appearances of concern, for example, or indifference, satisfaction, or dislike, where the utmost sincerity and candor should be used, and would gain credit, if no semblance of art showed itself in the inadvertent discourse, perhaps of only one of them, the hazard is in proportion to the number. And where every one must be consulted on every particular of common business, in answering every letter, &c., and one of them is offended if the smallest thing is done without his consent, the difficulty of being often and long enough together, the different opinions, and the time consumed in debating them, the interruptions by new applicants in the time of meeting, &c. &c., occasion so much postponing and delay, that correspondence languishes, occasions are lost, and the business is always behindhand.

I have mentioned the difficulty of being often and long enough together. This is considerable, where they

cannot all be accommodated in the same house; but to find three people whose tempers are so good, and who like so well one another's company, and manner of living and conversing, as to agree well themselves, though being in one house, and whose servants will not by their indiscretion quarrel with one another, and by artful misrepresentations draw their masters in to take their parts, to the disturbance of necessary harmony, these are difficulties still greater and almost insurmountable. And, in consideration of the whole, I wish Congress would separate us.

The Spanish galleons, which have been impatiently expected, are at length happily arrived. The fleet and army returning from Brazil is still out, but supposed to be on the way homewards. When that and the South Sea ships are arrived, it will appear whether Spain's accession to the treaty has been delayed for the reasons given, or whether the reasons were only given to excuse the delay.

The English and French fleets, of nearly equal force, are now both at sea. It is not doubted, but that if they meet, there will be a battle; for, though England through fear affects to understand it to be still peace, and would excuse the depredations she has made on the commerce of France, by pretences of illicit trade, &c., yet France considers the war begun, from the time of the King's message to Parliament, complaining of the insult France had given by treating with us, and demanding aids to resist it, and the answer of both Houses, offering their lives and fortunes. These, and the taking several frigates, are deemed indisputable hostilities. Accordingly, orders are given to all the fleets and armed ships to return hostilities, and encouragement is offered to privateers, &c. An ambassador from Spain is indeed gone to London, and

joyfully received there, in the idea that peace may be made by his mediation. But as yet we learn nothing certain of his mission, and doubt his effecting any thing of the kind.

War in Germany seems to be inevitable, and this occasioning great borrowings of money in Holland and elsewhere, by the powers concerned, makes it more difficult for us to succeed in ours. When we engaged to Congress to pay their bills for the interest of the sums they should borrow, we did not dream of their drawing on us for other occasions. We have already paid of Congress' drafts, to returned officers, eighty-two thousand two hundred and eleven livres, and we know not how much more of that kind we have to pay, because the Committee have never let us know the amount of those drafts, or their account of them never reached us, and they still continue coming in. And we are now surprised with advice of drafts from Mr. Bingham, to the amount of one hundred thousand more. If you reduce us to bankruptcy here, by a nonpayment of your drafts, consider the consequences. In my humble opinion no drafts should be made on us without first learning from us that we shall be able to answer them.

M. de Beaumarchais has been out of town ever since the arrival of your power to settle with him. I hope he will be able to furnish the supplies mentioned in the invoice and contract. The settlement may be much better made with the assistance of Mr. Deane, we being not privy to the transactions. We have agreed to give M. Dumas two hundred louis a year, thinking that he well deserves it. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Exchange of Prisoners. — Remarks concerning Peace.

Golden Square, 14 August, 1778.

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you as long ago as the 14th of the last month, to tell you, that the administration here had given their consent to the exchange of prisoners at Calais, and that they would agree to give any ship on your part a free passport from Brest to Calais, upon your sending to me a similar assurance that any British ship going to Calais and for the purpose of the exchange should have free entrance without molestation, and free egress with the prisoners in exchange. I have again received a confirmation of these assurances from the Board of Admiralty here, and we are now waiting for your answer, after the receipt of which, the exchange will be forwarded with all expedition.

I had written thus much to you by the last post, and then, as you know that peace with America is always uppermost in my thoughts, my pen ran on with some ideas and propositions to that end, which led me insensibly beyond the hour of the post. I see so little probability in my attempt, in the present state of things, that I confess I am quite disheartened, though I cannot keep my thoughts from the subject; but I think it not worth while to trouble you with any more propositions at present. I am confident, that the wishes of both nations are for peace, but the moment any proposition is reduced into shape or terms, its virtue ceases; and, instead of drawing parties together, it excites jealous repulsions between them. If more successful or more promising times should come, my thoughts will ever be upon the watch.

These sentiments are suggested to my mind upon the report of the late negotiation between the Congress and the Commissioners.* If I can judge of the disposition of the two nations, I think that terms of safe and honorable mediation might be offered between them, but we must wait for the favorable moment. A premature anxiety repels, instead of inviting its object. Peace will ever be my object; when the opportunity offers favorably, then will be the time to strike. A man of feeling cannot be indifferent at such a critical time, especially when the parties seem nearer together, than they think themselves. Jealousies and punctilios make the greatest difficulties. If, instead of the distance of three thousand miles, the treaty were set on foot only at the distance of three hundred, and conducted with confidence, a more fortunate end might be expected. I shall be glad to hear from you soon. Believe me ever yours most affectionately,

D. HARTLEY.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, 6 September, 1778.

DEAR CAPTAIN,

I received your favors of the 24th and 31st of August. I am told, by M. de C——, that M. de S—— is sorry you did not go with M. d'Orvilliers. He had sent orders for that purpose, and your staying at L'Orient occasioned your missing the opportunity. Your letter was sent to the Prince de Nassau. I am confident something will be done for you, though I do not yet know what.

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* Commissioners sent to America by the British ministry with propositions for a reconciliation. See ALMON'S *Remembrancer*, 1778, p. 11.— *Washington's Writings*, Vol. V. pp. 344, 397, 401; Vol. VI. pp. 16, 79, 96

Dr. Bancroft has been indisposed, and I have not lately seen him; but I hear he is getting better, and suppose he has written. I go out of town early this morning for a few days, but the other Commissioners will answer your letter. I am glad you have procured a guard for the prisoners. It is a good piece of service. They have concluded in England to send us an equal number of ours, and we expect to-morrow to send the passport for their cartel ship, which is to bring them. If we are to deliver theirs at Calais, I should be for accepting thankfully the offer you mention.

We have no news from America, but what comes through England. Clinton's letter is in the *London Gazette*, and for style and coloring is so like Keppel's, that I cannot help thinking neither of them originals, but both the performance of some under-secretary, whose business it is to cook the news for the ministers. Upon the whole, we learn that the English army was well worried in its march,* and that their whole fleet and forces are now blocked up in New York by Washington and Gates on the land side, and by Count d'Estaing by sea, and that they will soon be in want of provisions. I sympathize with you in what I know you must suffer from your present inactivity; but have patience. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* The march across New Jersey to New York, after the evacuation of Philadelphia. During this march was fought the battle of Monmouth.

TO F. GRAND.

Regulations of Congress respecting Privateers.

Passy, 14 October, 1778.

SIR,

I have considered the note you put into my hands, containing a complaint of the conduct of Captain Conyngham in the *Revenge* privateer. We have no desire to justify him in any irregularities he may have committed. On the contrary, we are obliged to our friends, who give us information of the misconduct of any cruisers, that we may take the occasion of representing the same to our government, and recommending more effectual provisions for suppressing, punishing, and preventing such practices in future.

By the papers I have the honor to send you enclosed, and which I request you would put into the hands of his Excellency, Count d'Aranda, the care of the Congress to avoid giving offence to neutral powers will appear most evident; First, in the commission given to privateers, wherein it appears that sureties are taken of their owners, that nothing shall be done by them "*inconsistent with the usage and custom of nations*," and those sureties are obliged to make good all damages. Courts of admiralty are regularly established in every one of the United States for judging of such matters, to which courts any person injured may apply, and will certainly find redress. Secondly, in the proclamation of Congress, whereby strict orders are given to all officers of armed vessels, to pay a sacred regard to the rights of neutral powers, and the usage and customs of civilized nations, and a declaration made, that, if they transgress, they shall not be allowed to claim the protection of the States, but shall

suffer such punishment as, by the usage and custom of nations, may be inflicted on them. Lastly, in the particular care taken by Congress to secure the property of some subjects of Portugal (a power that has not been very favorable to us), although no reclamation has been made.

All these will show, that the States give no countenance to acts of piracy; and, if Captain Conyngham has been guilty of that crime, he will certainly be punished for it when duly prosecuted; for not only a regard to justice in general, but a strong disposition to cultivate the friendship of Spain, for whose sovereign they have the greatest respect, will induce the Congress to pay great attention to every complaint, public and private, that shall come from thence. I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Extracts from a Scotch Song. — Terms of Peace. — Indiscreet Conduct of the British Commissioners in America.

Passy, 26 October, 1778.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received yours, without date, containing an old Scotch song, full of natural sentiment and beautiful simplicity. I cannot make an entire application of it to present circumstances; but, taking it in parts, and changing persons, some of it is extremely *apropos*. First, Jennie may be supposed Old England, and Jamie, America. Jennie laments the loss of Jamie, and recollects with pain his love for her; his industry in business to promote her wealth and welfare, and her own ingratitude.

"Young Jamie loved me weel,
And sought me for his bride,
But saving ane crown,
He had naithing beside.
To make the crown a pound, my Jamie ganged to sea,
And the crown and the pound were all for me."

Her grief for this separation is expressed very pathetically.

"The ship was a wreck,
Why did na Jennie die;
O why was I spared
To cry, Wae is me!"

There is no doubt that honest Jamie had still so much love for her as to pity her in his heart, though he might, at the same time, be not a little angry with her.

Towards the conclusion, we must change the persons; and let Jamie be Old England; Jennie, America. Then honest Jennie, having made a treaty of marriage with Gray, expresses her firm resolution of fidelity, in a manner that does honor to her good sense, and her virtue.

"I may not think of Jamie,
For that would be a sin.
But I maun do my best,
A gude wife to be;
For auld Robin Gray
Is very kind to me."

You ask my sentiments on a truce for five or seven years, in which no mention should be made of that stumblingblock to England, the independence of America.

I must tell you fairly and frankly, that there can be no treaty of peace with us, in which France is not included. But I think a treaty might be made between the three powers, in which England *expressly* renouncing the dependence of America seems no more necessary, than her renouncing the title of King of

France, which has always been claimed for her kings. Yet, perhaps, it would be better for England to act nobly and generously on the occasion, by granting more than she could, at present, be compelled to grant; make America easy on the score of old claims; cede all that remains in North America; and thus conciliate and strengthen a young power, which she wishes to have a future and serviceable friend. I do not think England would be a loser by such a cession. She may hold her remaining possessions there, but not without a vast expense; and they would be the occasion of constant jealousies, frequent quarrels, and renewed wars. The United States, continually growing stronger, will have them at last; and, by the generous conduct above hinted at, all the intermediate loss of blood and treasure might be spared, and solid, lasting peace promoted. This seems to me good counsel, but I know it cannot be followed.*

The friend you mention must always be welcome to me, with or without the cheeses; but I do not see how his coming hither could be of any use at present, unless in the quality of a plenipotentiary, to treat of a sincere peace between all parties.

Your Commissioners are acting very indiscreetly in America. They first spoke very disrespectfully of our

* Mr. Hartley had written as follows. "I have told you before, that my heart is always set upon peace. In the present circumstances between the two countries, I can only think of the proposition to mediate. You may as easily imagine, that the immediate and explicit acknowledgment of independence must be as grating to this country, as I can that America will not finally depart from it. The answer of the Congress to the Commissioners seems to imply this. What think you of suspending this point for five or seven years, by a truce, and that nothing in the interim shall impeach their independence? If such a proposition as this would bring the parties together, I think there would not be wanting a member of Parliament to propose it to the House."

good ally. They have since called in question the power of Congress to treat with them; and have endeavoured to begin a dispute about the detention of Burgoyne's troops, an affair which I conceive not to be within their commission. They are vainly trying, by publications, to excite the people against the Congress. Governor Johnstone has been attempting to bribe the members; and, without the least regard to truth, has asserted three propositions, which, he says, he will undertake to prove. The two first of them I *know* to be false, and I *believe* the third to be so.* The Congress have refused to treat with the Commissioners, while he continues one of them, and he has therefore resigned.

These gentlemen do not appear well qualified for their business. I think they will never *heal* the breach, but they may *widen* it. I am, my very dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* Governor Johnstone was one of the British Commissioners for treating with Congress. These propositions were contained in a letter written by him to Francis Dana, a member of Congress, and dated at Philadelphia, June 10th, 1778. "There are three facts," said he, "which I wish to assure you of. First, that Dr. Franklin, on the 28th of March last, in discussing the several articles we wish to make the basis of our treaty, was perfectly satisfied they were beneficial to North America, and such as she should accept. Second, that this treaty with France was not the first treaty, that France had *exacted*, and with which Mr. Simeon Deane had put to sea, but granted and acceded to after the sentiments of the people of Great Britain had fully changed, after the friends to America had gained their points for reconciliation, and solely with a view to disappoint the good effects of our endeavours. The third fact is, that Spain, unasked, had sent a formal message, disapproving of the conduct of France."

Subsequent events proved this third fact as unfounded as the two first. Although Spain did not accede to the treaty, yet she joined France the year following in the war against England, and continued it till the general peace. See letter to Joseph Reed, dated March 19th, 1780.

FROM JOHN CHARLES DE ZINNERN TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Latin History of the American Revolution. — Inquiries on that Subject.

Translation.

Buda, in Hungary, 26 October, 1778

Sir,

I was born the subject of a great monarchy, and under a government whose rule is mild; but I cannot tell you what joy I feel, when I hear or read of your progress in America. To speak the truth, I look upon you and all the chiefs of your new republic, as angels, sent by Heaven to guide and comfort the human race. To give a public manifestation of this sentiment, I have composed a work in Latin, the title of which is, *Notitia Historica de Coloniis Fœderatis in Americâ.* I have also another, *De Viris Illustribus Americæ;* but I must wait for the end of the present war, which furnishes me abundant materials for drawing the character of your heroes.

I have, I confess, some doubts on the subject, and for that reason I recently went from Buda to Vienna to consult Mr. Lee, who was there, but I did not find him upon my arrival; and the secretary of the French ambassador advised me to address myself to you. It is to you then, Sir, that I must apply, and humbly ask for information concerning the birthplace of Washington, Hancock, Putnam, Gates, Charles Lee, and Arnold, and for anecdotes of their life. I can learn

* This letter is curious, as showing the interest taken in American affairs even in the remote parts of Europe. Dr. Franklin received many letters of a similar character, written from nearly all the countries of Europe, and in various languages, but mostly in Latin, French, German, or Italian.

nothing on the subject from the newspapers, particularly with regard to Arnold. They sometimes make him out a German from Mentz, then an American from Connecticut, then an ex-capuchin, then a Norwich grocer.* As for you, Sir, I take you for a Bostonian, a superior genius, and a principal instrument in all things during the war. Amongst other particulars, I should like to know the truth of what several papers mention, that Charles Lee did not do his duty at Monmouth in New Jersey, and that Congress dismissed him for misconduct. I will suspend my judgment until I hear from you, if you should think proper to favor me with an answer.

If you can in any way make me useful to you, do but command, and I shall be most happy. I have acquaintances in Hungary, and a great many in Vienna. I believe, indeed, that it is far less important for you at present to have connexions with Austria, than to come before the world as a sovereign state, independent of England. You are very wise in this; but Mr. Lee did not come at the right moment. He should have taken another road, as I will write to you by and by.

Have the kindness to solve the doubts I have mentioned to you, and to grant me your favor and your friendship, which I should regard as the greatest blessing of my life. I shall feel it a duty to obey any of your commands, and to remain always, with the most profound respect, &c.

JOHN CHARLES DE ZINNERN.†

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* A person in Mentz, by the name of Arnold, wrote to Dr. Franklin, making inquiries about General Arnold. The writer said, he had a son, who left him in early life, and whom he suspected to be the distinguished general of that name in the American army.

† M. de Zinnern signed himself, "Prefect of the Imperial and Royal Academy at Buda."

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Marquis de Lafayette. — Count d'Estaing. — Proposed Invasion of Canada.

Boston, 4 January, 1779.

My dear Sir,

The Marquis de Lafayette will do me the honor to be the bearer of this letter. This young nobleman has done honor to his nation, as well as to himself, by the manner in which he has served these States. His intrepidity and alertness in the field are highly distinguished. His prudence and good temper are equally remarkable. He is highly esteemed and beloved in Congress, in the army, and through the States; and, though we are not without parties, and his situation has been sometimes very delicate, I have never heard that he has made a single enemy. He has gone through great fatigues, he has faced uncommon dangers, he has bled for our country, and leaves it, as far as I am able to find, with universal applause. In short, his whole conduct, both public and private, appears to me to have been most happily adapted to serve the great purpose of the alliance, and cement the two nations. Justice obliges me to make this mention of one, who has done so much for our country, as well as his own, and from whose acquaintance, with which he has honored me, I have received the greatest pleasure. His acquaintance with our military and political affairs will enable him to give you many details, which cannot easily be conveyed by writing.*

You will hear, before this reaches you, of what has been done in this quarter by the armament under the

* Mr. Carmichael, who had lately arrived in the United States from Europe, wrote as follows to Dr. Franklin, in a latter dated at Philadel-

orders of the Count d'Estaing. The abilities of this commander, his bravery, and zeal for our common cause, are indisputably great. No man could have done more in his situation, than he has done. He was unfortunate in the weather he met with, which greatly delayed his passage to these seas, gave an opportunity to the British navy and army to escape from Philadelphia, snatched a victory from him off Rhode Island, and put his fleet in such a condition, that he was indispensably obliged to leave that place at a critical time, which occasioned reflections from

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phia, October 30th, 1778. Speaking of the return of the Marquis de Lafayette to France, he says;

"No one but himself has known how to reconcile the clashing parties of this continent to his own views. By this you may judge not only of his amiable character, but of his discretion. The resolves and letters of Congress in his favor will show you their sense of his merit, and I do assure you, that the sentiments of the people at large, and of the army, are the same. These public testimonies being extremely agreeable to him, I hope you will pardon the liberty I take, as his friend, of hinting to you what a satisfaction it will be to his noble family, that the ministry should be acquainted by you, rather than any one else, of the opinion entertained of him here; for which reason, may it not be proper to put the resolves and letters into the hands of the ministry instantly on the receipt of them, and before the Marquis makes his appearance at Versailles?

"I am sure all the consequence he can derive from the influence of his family, or from his own merit, will be exerted for our interests, because he thinks them blended with those of his nation; and I know, that personally he ardently desires to cultivate your friendship and to merit your esteem. He will inform you of the parties in our Congress, and in our army; parties, which, at another time, might have been fatal, and are now dangerous. There are seeds of great evils scattered abroad, and I am much afraid that there are some among us, who would ape Cromwell if they could disgust our Fairfax so much as to make him seek retirement; and, to effect this, no endeavours are wanting of those, who are his enemies and the enemies of every one, who is an obstacle to the gratification of their private ambition."

Mr. Carmichael here alludes to the cabal against Genera. Washington. See *Washington's Writings*, Vol. I. p. 266; Vol. V. pp. 483–518. For the resolves and letters of Congress, respecting General Lafayette see also Vol. VI. pp. 501–507.

some, that were unmerited. He bore all with a manly patience and uncommon prudence. I admired his firmness, silence, and condescension. He relied on the proofs he had given of attachment to our cause, and of the capacity and undauntedness with which he had prosecuted the service upon which he was sent.

The account he gave of the reasons for coming to Boston with his fleet, before the Council of this State, not only satisfied that body, but gave them a high idea of his merits as a commander. The prejudices of a few soon vanished, which had been raised by an honest but indiscreet warmth in some officers employed in the expedition against Rhode Island. His officers imitated their commander in preserving the best order through the fleet during their residence here; everybody admired the peaceable, inoffensive, courteous behaviour of such a number of men, and the Count left us on the 4th of November last, with the strongest impressions of esteem and affection for him, of the friendship of his court and nation for us, and of the superior order and civility prevailing in the French forces. He is gone, it is conjectured (for nobody pretends to know), for the West Indies. We hope, if the war continues, to see him in the spring, and that Canada will be wrested from the British power. This may be easily done by a joint invasion by sea and land, provided our finances will allow us to support an army; but the depreciation of our money is so great, that I fear our inability to do this, unless we have assistance and can procure loans from abroad. If such a plan of operations is adopted, France must give us the most unequivocal assurances, that she means not to resume the government of Canada, but to incorporate it with the United States. This is her true interest, and is so agreeable to the principles and

basis of the alliance, that I have not the least doubt she intends it, and it will only be needful to make known her intentions in the most explicit manner, at least to us.*

It gives me great pleasure to hear of the continuance of your health and vivacity. Though it is long since I have had the pleasure of a line from you, I am sure you do not forget one, who is, with the greatest respect and the warmest friendship, ever yours,

SAMUEL COOPER.

TO RALPH IZARD.†

Financial Affairs of the United States in Europe.

Passy, 4 January, 1779.

SIR,

Your intimation, that you expect more money from us, obliges us to expose to you our circumstances. Upon the supposition, that Congress had borrowed in America but five millions of dollars, or twenty-five millions of livres, and relying on the remittances intended to be sent to us, for answering other demands, we gave expectations that we should be able to pay here the interest of that sum, as a means of supporting the credit of the currency. The Congress have borrowed near twice that sum, and are now actually drawing on us for the interest, the bills appearing here daily for

* Concerning this proposed Canada expedition, see SPARKS's *Life of Washington*, 2d ed. p. 287.

† This letter was written by Dr. Franklin, but intended to be signed by the Commissioners jointly. On the back of the manuscript is the following endorsement. "Rough draft of a proposed letter in answer to one from Mr. Izard to the Commissioners, dated January 2d." As it is here called the draft of a *proposed* letter, it may possibly never have been sent.

acceptance. Their distress for money in America has been so great, from the enormous expense of the war, that they have also been induced to draw on us for very large sums, to stop other pressing demands; and they have not been able to purchase remittances for us to the extent they proposed; and, of what they have sent, much has been taken or treacherously carried into England; only two small cargoes of tobacco having arrived, and they are long since mortgaged to the Farmers General, so that they produce us nothing, but leave us expenses to pay.

The Continental vessels of war, which come to France, have likewise required great sums of us, to furnish or refit them, and supply the men with necessaries. The prisoners, too, who escape from England, claim a very expensive assistance from us, and are much dissatisfied with the scanty allowance we are able to afford them. The interest bills above mentioned, of the drawing of which we have received notice, amount to two millions and a half, and we have not a fifth part of the sum in our banker's hands to answer them. And large orders to us from Congress for supplies of clothing, arms, and ammunition, remain uncomplied with for want of money.

In this situation of our affairs, we hope you will not insist on our giving you a farther credit with our banker, with whom we are daily in danger of having no farther credit ourselves. It is not a year since you received from us the sum of two thousand guineas, which you thought necessary on account of your being to set out immediately for Florence. You have not incurred the expense of that journey. You are a gentleman of fortune. You did not come to France with any dependence on being maintained here with your family at the expense of the United States, in

the time of their distress, and without rendering them the equivalent service they expected.

On all these considerations we should rather hope, that you would be willing to reimburse us the sum we have advanced to you, if it may be done with any possible convenience to your affairs. Such a supply would at least enable us to relieve more liberally our unfortunate countrymen, who have long been prisoners, stripped of every thing, of whom we daily expect to have near three hundred upon our hands by the exchange. We have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Money advanced to Mr. Izard and Mr. Lee.

Passy, 15 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

It being undoubtedly our duty to give the clearest account to Congress of the disbursement of their money intrusted to us; and as I apprehend our advancing to Mr. William Lee and Mr. Ralph Izard so large a sum as four thousand guineas at once, in February, 1778, without any order of Congress for so doing, and at a time when money was much wanted to fulfil their actual orders in the purchase of arms, &c., may subject the Commissioners to censure, I think it right and necessary to relate the circumstances, that they may be communicated to our constituents.

Those gentlemen, then, having represented to Mr. Deane, Mr. Lee, and myself, that, though they had received commissions to go and reside at the courts of Berlin, Vienna, and Florence, no provision had arrived for their subsistence; that they were nearly ready to set out for their respective destinations, but wanted

money to defray the expense of their journeys; for which, they therefore requested us to furnish them with a credit on our banker; — the Commissioners, fearing that the public interests might possibly suffer, if those journeys were delayed till the necessary provision or orders should arrive from America, thought they might be justified in giving such a credit, for the expense of those journeys; and Mr. Lee, being asked what sum he imagined would be necessary, said, justly, that the expense of his journey could not be exactly ascertained beforehand; but, if he were empowered to draw on our banker, he should certainly only take from time to time what was absolutely necessary, and therefore it was of little importance for what sum the credit should be ordered; it would however look handsome and confidential, if the sum were two thousand louis. We thereupon, confiding that no more of this money would be taken out of our disposition, than the expenses of the journeys as they should accrue, did frankly but unwarily give the orders.

Mr. Deane and myself were, however, soon surprised with the intelligence, that the gentlemen had gone directly to the banker, and by virtue of these orders had taken out of our account the whole sum mentioned, and carried it to their own; leaving the money indeed in his hands, but requiring his receipt for it as their money, for which he was to be accountable to them only.

This enormous sum having been received by those gentlemen not above ten months, I was still more surprised, when the following letters were communicated to me by my present colleagues, requiring more money. My colleague, Mr. Adams, was at first as much surprised as myself. ——*

* Here the manuscript breaks off, apparently in an unfinished state,

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Alliance between France and the United States an Obstacle to Peace.

London, 23 January, 1779.

My dear Friend,

You know my constant and earnest desire for peace. You are so fully possessed of my principles upon these subjects, that you cannot doubt but that the sentiments expressed in the fourth letter on the American war, lately written by a member of Parliament in this country to his constituents, do perfectly accord with mine.*

In your letter of 26th October last, you seem to express, that a visit from a friend would not be unwelcome, if that friend were in the character of plenipotentiary, to treat of a sincere peace between all parties. You must know from the course of public transactions in England, that the alliance between France and America is a great stumblingblock. Whatever engagements America may have entered into, they may, at least by consent of parties, be relinquished for the purpose of removing so material an obstacle to any general treaty of free and unengaged parties. If the parties could meet for the sake of peace, upon free and open ground, I should think that a very fair proposition to be offered to the people of England, and an equitable proposition in itself. The universal destruction attending war to all parties ought to be a motive for the restoration of peace, superseding all

and it is uncertain whether this letter was sent. The substance of it, however, is contained in a letter to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, dated May 26th, 1779.

* The letters were written by Mr. Hartley, and published by Almon.

minute considerations. Knowing the sincerity of your desire for peace, I throw out to you the cursory thoughts, which present themselves to me, to take the chance of starting any idea, which may lead to that blessed end. I am yours affectionately,

G. B.*

TO MRS. MARGARET STEVENSON.

Private Incidents. — His Mode of living in France.

Passy, 25 January, 1779.

It is always with great pleasure, when I think of our long continued friendship, which had not the least interruption in the course of twenty years (some of the happiest of my life), that I spent under your roof and in your company. If I do not write to you as often as I used to do, when I happened to be absent from you, it is owing partly to the present difficulty of sure communication, and partly to an apprehension of some inconvenience, that my correspondence might possibly occasion you. Be assured, my dear friend, that my regard, esteem, and affection for you, are not in the least impaired or diminished; and that, if circumstances would permit, nothing would afford me so much satisfaction, as to be with you in the same house, and to experience again your faithful, tender care, and attention to my interests, health, and comfortable living, which so long and steadily attached me to you, and which I shall ever remember with gratitude.

I thought I had mentioned to you before, (and I believe I did, though my letter may have miscarried,) that I had received the white cloth suit, the sword,

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* See the note, p. 175.

and the saddle for Temple, all in good order. I mention them now again, because Polly tells me you had not heard of their arrival. I wore the clothes a good deal last summer. There is one thing more, that I wish to have, if you should meet with an opportunity of sending it. I mean the copper pot, lined with silver, to roast fowls in by means of a heater. I should also be glad of the piece of elephant's tooth. It is old ivory, perhaps of the time before the flood, and would be a rarity to some friends here. But I doubt you will not be able to send them.

I rejoice to learn, that your health is established, and that you live pleasantly in a country town, with agreeable neighbours, and have your dear children about you. My love to every one of them. I long to see them and you; but the times do not permit me the hope of it. Why do you never write to me? I used to love to read your letters, and I regret your long silence. They were seasoned with good sense and friendship, and even your spelling pleased me. Polly knows I think the worst spelling the best. I do not write to her by this conveyance. You will let her know, that I acknowledge the receipt of her pleasing letter, dated the 11th instant. I shall now only observe to you upon it, that I know not how the patent can be taken out in Jacob's name. I am sure he had no claim to it; for when I first proposed to him the making of such wheels at Mr. Viny's, in the country, he objected to it as impracticable. But Mr. Viny, who seized the thought, and carried it into execution, had certainly the best right to the patent. I wish he would send me a good drawing, with the proportions, of the little carriage with horses, which his children came once in to see us. How do they all do, and particularly my little patient Bessum?

Since my coming here, I have been told, that Mr. Henley, the linen-draper, had said, on my going to America, that I had gone away in his debt. I can hardly believe it. Let me know if you have heard such a thing, and what is the meaning of it. I thought he had been fully paid, and still think so, and shall, till I am assured of the contrary. Let me know, at the same time, how my account stands with you.

You wish to know how I live. It is in a fine house, situated in a neat village, on high ground, half a mile* from Paris, with a large garden to walk in. I have abundance of acquaintance, dine abroad six days in seven. Sundays I reserve to dine at home, with such Americans as pass this way; and I then have my grandson Ben, with some other American children from the school.

If being treated with all the politeness of France, and the apparent respect and esteem of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, can make a man happy, I ought to be so. Indeed, I have nothing to complain of, but a little too much business, and the want of that order and economy in my family, which reigned in it when under your prudent direction. My paper gives me only room to add, that I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

* William Temple Franklin says the distance was "about a league," meaning, probably, from the central parts of the capital; whereas Dr. Franklin here reckons the distance from the extreme part of the city towards Passy.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Answer to Propositions for quitting the Alliance with France.

Passy, 3 February, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I have just received your favor of the 23d past, in which you mention, "that the alliance between France and America is the great stumblingblock in the way of making peace;" and you go on to observe, that "whatever engagements America may have entered into, they may, at least by consent of parties, *be relinquished*, for the purpose of removing so material an obstacle to any general treaty of free and unengaged parties;" adding, that, "if the parties could meet for the sake of peace upon *free* and *open* ground, you should think *that* a very fair proposition to be offered to the people of England, and an equitable proposition in itself."

The long, steady, and kind regard you have shown for the welfare of America, by the whole tenor of your conduct in Parliament, satisfies me, that this proposition never took its rise with you, but has been suggested from some other quarter; and that your excess of humanity, your love of peace, and your fear for us, that the destruction we are threatened with will certainly be effected, have thrown a mist before your eyes, which hindered you from seeing the malignity and mischief of it. We know that your King hates Whigs and Presbyterians; that he thirsts for our blood, of which he has already drunk large draughts; that weak and unprincipled ministers are ready to execute the wickedest of his orders, and his venal Parliament equally ready to vote them just. Nor the

smallest appearance of a reason can be imagined, capable of inducing us to think of relinquishing a solid alliance with one of the most amiable, as well as most powerful princes of Europe, for the expectation of unknown terms of peace, to be afterwards offered to us by *such a government;* a government, that has already shamefully broken all the compacts it ever made with us. This is worse than advising us to drop the substance for the shadow. The dog, after he found his mistake, might possibly have recovered his mutton; but we could never hope to be trusted again by France, or indeed by any other nation under heaven. Nor does there appear any more necessity for dissolving an alliance with France, before you can treat with us, than there would of dissolving your alliance with Holland, or your union with Scotland, before we could treat with you. Ours is, therefore, no *material obstacle* to a treaty, as you suppose it to be. Had Lord North been the author of such a proposition, all the world would have said it was insidious, and meant only to deceive and divide us from our friends, and then to ruin us; supposing our fears might be so strong as to procure an acceptance of it. But, thanks to God, that is not the case. We have long since settled all the account in our own minds. We know the worst you can do to us, if you have your wish, is, to confiscate our estates and take our lives, to rob and murder us; and this you have seen we are ready to hazard, rather than come again under your detested government.

You must observe, my dear friend, that I am a little warm. Excuse me. It is over. Only let me counsel you not to think of being sent hither on so fruitless an errand, as that of making such a proposition.

It puts me in mind of the comic farce entitled, *God-*

send, or The Wreckers. You may have forgotten it; but I will endeavour to amuse you by recollecting a little of it.

SCENE. *Mount's Bay.*

[*A ship riding at anchor in a great storm. A lee shore full of rocks, and lined with people, furnished with axes and carriages to cut up wrecks, knock the sailors on the head, and carry off the plunder; according to custom.*]

1*st Wrecker.* This ship rides it out longer than I expected; she must have good ground tackle.

2*d Wrecker.* We had better send off a boat to her, and persuade her to take a pilot, who can afterwards run her ashore, where we can best come at her.

3*d Wrecker.* I doubt whether the boat can live in this sea; but if there are any brave fellows willing to hazard themselves for the good of the public, and a double share, let them say ay.

Several Wreckers. I, I, I, I.

[*The boat goes off, and comes under the ship's stern.*]

Spokesman. So ho, the ship, ahoa!

Captain. Hulloa.

Sp. Would you have a pilot?

Capt. No, no!

Sp. It blows hard, and you are in danger.

Capt. I know it.

Sp. Will you buy a better cable? We have one in the boat here.

Capt. What do you ask for it?

Sp. Cut that you have, and then we 'll talk about the price of this.

Capt. I shall do no such foolish thing. I have lived in your parish formerly, and know the heads of

ye too well to trust ye; keep off from my cable there; I see you have a mind to cut it yourselves. If you go any nearer to it, I 'll fire into you and sink you.

Sp. It is a damned rotten French cable, and will part of itself in half an hour. Where will you be then, Captain? You had better take our offer.

Capt. You offer nothing, you rogues, but treachery and mischief. My cable is good and strong, and will hold long enough to baulk all your projects.

Sp. You talk unkindly, Captain, to people who came here only for your good.

Capt. I know you came for all our *goods*, but, by God's help, you shall have none of them; you shall not serve us as you did the Indiamen.

Sp. Come, my lads, let 's be gone. This fellow is not so great a fool as we took him to be. ——

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 22 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received your proposition for removing the stumblingblock. Your constant desire of peace ought to endear you to both sides; but this proposition seems to be naturally impracticable. We can never think of quitting a solid alliance, made and ratified, in order to be in a state for receiving unknown proposals of peace, which may vanish in the discussion. The truth is, we have no kind of faith in your government, which appears to us as insidious and deceitful as it is unjust and cruel; its character is that of the Spider in Thomson,

"Cunning and fierce,
Mixture abhorred!"

Besides, we cannot see the necessity of our relin-

quishing our alliance with France in order to a treaty, any more than of your relinquishing yours with Holland. I am, very affectionately, yours,

N. A.*

TO PATRICK HENRY, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

On the Subject of procuring military Supplies in Europe for the State of Virginia.

Passy, 26 February, 1779.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter of March 3d, 1778, by Captain Lemaire, acquainting me, that the State of Virginia has desired Mr. William Lee, your agent, to procure a quantity of arms and military stores, and requesting me to assist him with my influence in obtaining them on credit.

Being glad of any opportunity of serving Virginia, and showing my regard to the request of a person whom I so highly esteem, and Mr. William Lee being absent, I found immediately three different merchants here, men of fortune, who were each of them willing to undertake furnishing the whole, and giving the credit desired. But, Mr. Arthur Lee being understood to have taken the management of the affair into his own hands, one of the three soon after refused to have any thing to do with it; a second, whose letter to me I enclose, apprehending difficulties from Mr. Lee's temper, required my name and Mr. Adams's to the agreement, which he supposes Mr. Lee did not like, as his offer was not accepted. I know not why the

* North America. The letter was written by Dr. Franklin, but signed with these initials.

offer of the third was not taken. I was afterwards not at all consulted in the business.

Poor Lemaire was sent about Germany to find goods and credit, which consumed a great deal of time to little purpose. Several of the manufacturers wrote to me, that they would furnish him on my promise of payment. I referred them to Mr. Lee. On his return, Mr. Lee and he differed about his expenses. He complained frequently to me of Mr. Lee's not supplying him with necessary subsistence, and treating him with great haughtiness and insolence. I thought him really attentive to his duty, and not well used, but I avoided meddling with his affairs, to avoid, if possible, being engaged in quarrels myself. Mr. Lee, in fine, contracted with Messrs. Penet and Dacosta to supply great part of the goods. They, too, have differed, and I have several letters of complaints from those gentlemen; but I cannot remedy them, for I cannot change Mr. Lee's temper.

They have offered to send the things you want which he has refused, on my account; but, not knowing whether he has not provided them elsewhere, or in what light he may look upon my concerning myself with what he takes to be his business, I dare not meddle, being charged by the Congress to endeavour at maintaining a good understanding with their other servants, which is, indeed, a hard task with some of them. I hope, however, that you will at length be provided with what you want, which I think you might have been long since, if the affair had not been in hands, which men of honor and candor here are generally averse to dealing with, as not caring to hazard quarrels and abuses in the settlement of their accounts.

Our public affairs at this court continue to go on

well. Peace is soon expected in Germany, and we hope Spain is now near declaring against our enemies. I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Delay in the Exchange of Prisoners. — Losses of the British. — Growth of America.

Passy, 21 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly yours of the 2d instant. I am sorry you have had so much trouble in the affair of the prisoners. You have been deceived as well as I. No cartel ship has yet appeared; and it is now evident, that the delays have been of design, to give more opportunity of seducing the men by promises and hardships to seek their liberty in engaging against their country; for we learn from those who have escaped, that there are persons continually employed in cajoling and menacing them; representing to them that we neglect them; that your government is willing to exchange them; and that it is our fault it is not done; that all the news from America is bad on their side; we shall be conquered and they will be hanged, if they do not accept the gracious offer of being pardoned, on condition of serving the King, &c. A great part of your prisoners have been kept these six months on board a ship in Brest road, ready to be delivered; where I am afraid they were not so comfortably accommodated, as they might have been in French prisons. They are now ordered on shore. Dr. Bancroft has received your letter here. He did not go to Calais.*

* It had been intended, that Dr. Bancroft should proceed to England.

Knowing how earnestly and constantly you wish for peace, I cannot end a letter to you without dropping a word on that subject, to mark that my wishes are still in unison with yours. After the barbarities your nation has exercised against us, I am almost ashamed to own, that I feel sometimes for her misfortunes and her insanities. Your veins are open, and your best blood continually running. You have now got a little army into Georgia, and are triumphing in that success. Do you expect ever to see that army again? I know not what General Lincoln or General Thompson may be able to effect against them; but, if they stay through the summer in that climate, there is a certain *General Fever*, that I apprehend will give a good account of most of them. Perhaps you comfort yourselves, that our loss of blood is as great as yours. But, as physicians say, there is a great difference in the facility of repairing that loss between an old body and a young one. America adds to her numbers annually one hundred and fifty thousand souls. She, therefore, grows faster than you can diminish her, and will outgrow all the mischief you can do her. Have you the same prospects? But it is unnecessary for me to represent to you, or you to me, the mischiefs that each nation is subjected to by the war; we all see clear enough the nonsense of continuing it; the difficulty is, where to find sense enough to put an end to it. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me, &c.

B. Franklin.

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with a power from Dr. Franklin to negotiate an exchange of prisoners; but some difficulty having arisen, of which Mr. Hartley's letter contained an intimation, that journey did not take place —W. T. F.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Nantes, 13 April, 1779.

SIR,

I had yesterday the honor of yours of the 3d of this month. Captain Landais had so much diffidence in some of his crew, that he could not think of carrying home any of the most culpable of the conspirators, especially as he was so weakhanded. The naval code of the United States has great occasion for amendments in many particulars, without which there will be little discipline, subordination, or obedience.

I am happy, that you approve of clothing the petty officers, and thank you for the confidence you have put in me, in desiring that I would give directions in your behalf for what I may judge for the good of the service, funds and circumstances considered; a trust, however, that will involve me in difficulties, because I fear the demands of officers and men will be greater than I could wish. Obedience on board is so imperfect, that I do not expect the ship can possibly be got to sea without some money to the officers and men. I expect the ship here every day, and I hope in fifteen days to be at sea. If you have any letters, I should be glad to carry them.

I am much pleased with your reception at court in the new character, and I do not doubt that your opinion of the good will of this court to the United States is just. This benevolence is the result of so much wisdom, and is founded on such solid principles, that I have the utmost confidence in its perseverance to the end. Spain, too, must sooner or later see her true interests, and declare in favor of the same generous cause. I wish and hope with you, that it will be soon; if it is not, there is great reason to fear

a very unnecessary and profuse effusion of human blood; for the English derive such spirits from their captures at sea, and other little successes, and war is everlastingly so popular among them, when there is the least appearance of success, however deceitful, that they will go on, at whatever expense and hazard.

Master Johnny, whom you have honored with an affectionate remembrance, and who acts at present in the quadruple capacity of interpreter, secretary, companion, and domestic to his papa, desires me to present you his dutiful respects.

My regards, if you please, to Mr. Franklin and M. Gillée, and the young fry. I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

FROM JAMES HUTTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 15 April, 1779

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I took courage, and went this morning to Versailles to M. de Sartine, who immediately did all I desired.* I now, therefore, can go on my journey with cheerfulness, and thankfulness to you for your kindness to my people and to me. I am sure your giving me that protection had the wished-for effect here. How many obligations have I and my people in America to you!

It is a hardship for my heart, that circumstances have not allowed me to visit you. I am glad I saw you that evening at Mr. Grant's. I was proud of the general approbation I heard at different places given

* In giving a passport for a vessel about to sail with supplies for the Moravian missionaries on the coast of Labrador.

to your paper, read yesterday.* You will remember, Mr. Spangenberg desired you should be consulted on the Aurora Borealis by Mr. Crantz several years ago, I think 1769. I hope this paper will be printed.

I go from Paris to Lyons, April 22d, in order to have a good place in the *diligence*. I took it to-day. I shall always remember your civilities and kindness to, dear Sir, your much obliged and obedient,

JAMES HUTTON.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Character of the French People. — Too many Superfluities purchased in America.

Passy, 22 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received your very kind letter by Mr. Bradford, who appears a very sensible and amiable young gentleman, to whom I should with pleasure render any services in my power upon your much respected recommendation; but I understand he returns immediately.

It is with great sincerity I join you in acknowledging and admiring the dispensations of Providence in our favor. America has only to be thankful, and to persevere. God will finish his work, and establish their freedom; and the lovers of liberty will flock from all parts of Europe with their fortunes to participate with us of that freedom, as soon as peace is restored.

I am exceedingly pleased with your account of the

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* Paper on the *Aurora Borealis*, read by Dr. Franklin to the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris See Vol. VI. p. 417.

French politeness and civility, as it appeared among the officers and people of their fleet. They have certainly advanced in those respects many degrees beyond the English. I find them here a most amiable nation to live with. The Spaniards are by common opinion supposed to be cruel, the English proud, the Scotch insolent, the Dutch avaricious, &c., but I think the French have no national vice ascribed to them. They have some frivolities, but they are harmless. To dress their heads so that a hat cannot be put on them, and then wear their hats under their arms, and to fill their noses with tobacco, may be called follies, perhaps, but they are not vices. They are only the effects of the tyranny of custom. In short, there is nothing wanting in the character of a Frenchman, that belongs to that of an agreeable and worthy man. There are only some trifles surplus, or which might be spared.

Will you permit me, while I do them this justice, to hint a little censure on our own country people, which I do in good will, wishing the cause removed. You know the necessity we are under of supplies from Europe, and the difficulty we have at present in making returns. The interest bills would do a good deal towards purchasing arms, ammunition, clothing, sail-cloth, and other necessaries for defence. Upon inquiry of those who present these bills to me for acceptance, what the money is to be laid out in, I find that most of it is for superfluities, and more than half of it for tea. How unhappily in this instance the folly of our people, and the avidity of our merchants, concur to weaken and impoverish our country. I formerly computed, that we consumed before the war, in that single article, the value of five hundred thousand pounds sterling annually. Much of this was saved by stopping the use of it. I honored the virtuous resolution of

our women in foregoing that little gratification, and I lament that such virtue should be of so short duration. Five hundred thousand pounds sterling, annually laid out in defending ourselves, or annoying our enemies, would have great effect. With what face can we ask aids and subsidies from our friends, while we are wasting our own wealth in such prodigality? With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

On the Depreciation of American Paper Money.

Passy, 22 April, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your valuable letter by the Marquis de Lafayette, and another by Mr. Bradford. I can only write a few words in answer to the latter, the former not being at hand. The depreciation of our money must, as you observe, greatly affect salary men, widows, and orphans. Methinks this evil deserves the attention of the several legislatures, and ought, if possible, to be remedied by some equitable law, particularly adapted to their circumstances. I took all the pains I could in Congress to prevent the depreciation, by proposing first, that the bills should bear interest; this was rejected, and they were struck as you see them. Secondly, after the first emission, I proposed that we should stop, strike no more, but borrow on interest those we had issued. This was not then approved of, and more bills were issued. When, from the too great quantity, they began to depreciate, we agreed to borrow on interest; and I proposed, that, in order to fix the value of the principal, the interest should

be promised in hard dollars. This was objected to as impracticable; but I still continue of opinion, that, by sending out cargoes to purchase it, we might have brought in money sufficient for that purpose, as we brought in powder, &c. &c.; and that, though the attempt must have been attended with a disadvantage, the loss would have been a less mischief than any measure attending the discredit of the bills, which threatens to take out of our hands the great instrument of our defence.

The Congress did at last come into the proposal of paying the interest in real money. But when the whole mass of the currency was *under way* in depreciation, the momentum of its descent was too great to be stopped by a power, that might at first have been sufficient to prevent the beginning of the motion. The *only remedy* now seems to be a diminution of the quantity by a vigorous taxation, of great *nominal* sums, which the people are more able to pay, in proportion to the quantity and diminished value; and the *only consolation* under the evil is, that the public debt is proportionably diminished with the depreciation; and this by a kind of imperceptible tax, every one having paid a part of it in the fall of value that took place between the receiving and paying such sums as passed through his hands. For it should always be remembered, that the original intention was to sink the bills by taxes, which would as effectually extinguish the debt as an actual redemption.

This effect of paper currency is not understood on this side the water. And indeed the whole is a mystery even to the politicians, how we have been able to continue a war four years without money, and how we could pay with paper, that had no previously fixed fund appropriated specifically to redeem it. This cur

rency, as we manage it, is a wonderful machine. It performs its office when we issue it; it pays and clothes troops, and provides victuals and ammunition; and when we are obliged to issue a quantity excessive, it pays itself off by depreciation.

Our affairs in general stand in a fair light throughout Europe. Our cause is universally approved. Our constitutions of government have been translated and printed in most languages, and are so much admired for the spirit of liberty that reigns in them, that it is generally agreed we shall have a vast accession of national property after the war, from every part of this continent, and particularly from the British Islands. We have only to persevere and to be happy. Yours, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Proposing a Truce. — Interests of France. — Advantages of adopting some Preliminaries. — Observations on a Plan of Negotiation.

London, 22 April, 1779.

My dear Friend,

The bearer of this, and some other papers, is a very sensible and worthy gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of contracting an acquaintance since the commencement of the American troubles, originally upon the business of the American prisoners. It is a satisfaction to me at all times to have found him a friend to the restoration of peace between the two countries. It has likewise been an additional satisfaction and confirmation to me in my own thoughts upon that subject, to find that his sentiments, I think upon most or all of the subjects upon which we have conversed, have coincided with mine. We both seem possessed

of the opinion, that some plan of opening a negotiation upon preliminaries, which each side might find to be a sufficient security to itself, might be practicable; and then your sentiment, which you gave me in a letter some years ago, might have its free scope and effect, viz. *A little time given for cooling might have excellent effects.*

The sentiments I have opened to you in my late letters for some months past, and which I have reduced in an enclosed paper into a more specific shape, seem to me, upon very repeated reflection, to promise the fairest ground of good expectation. These propositions originate from myself, as a mediator; I have communications with both sides, but certainly no authority to make proposals from either; and perhaps neither side, if I were to make the propositions separately to each (being myself unauthorized), might give me positive consent. Each side separately might say No, from what is called political prudence; and yet each side might secretly wish, that the offer could be made, with a *done first*, from the other party. I think the proposition of a truce for five or seven years, leaving all things in the present dispute *in statu quo*, must be advantageous to all parties, if it were only in consideration that a general satisfactory peace to all parties *may* come among the *excellent effects of time given for cooling*. We can but fight it out at last. War never comes too late; wisdom may step in between. These matters have stolen upon us, and have arisen to great and formidable consequences from small and unexpected beginnings; but henceforward we should know by experience what to expect. If the rage of war could but be abated for a sufficient length of time for reason and reflection to operate, I think it would never revive. I cannot pretend to fore-

cast the result of any negotiation, but I think war would not revive; which is all that I want for my argument. Peace is a *bonum in se;* whereas the most favorable events of war are but relatively lesser evils; certainly they are evils; *mala in se*, not *bona in se.*

I hope, that a cessation of hostilities would produce a renewal of reflection; but, even to take the argument at the worst advantage, the two parties are at a cooling distance of three thousand miles asunder. If the flames of war could be but once extinguished, does not the Atlantic ocean contain cold water enough to prevent their bursting out again? I am very strongly of opinion, that the two nations of Great Britain and North America would accord to the propositions of a truce *for cooling.* I cannot say whether a British ministry would accord to it, because they will not tell me; nor can I say whether an American plenipotentiary would accord to it, because, probably, you will not tell me. I put myself into your hands, however, when I tell you frankly, I am of opinion that both would accord to it, if there could be a *done first* on either side, to bind the bargain fast. You have the odds of me in this matter, because you know one half of the question; and I cannot give you any proof on the other side, but only my own presumptive judgment upon observation, and upon a course of reasoning in my own thoughts.

But, for France. My judgment would be, that, if the proposition of the proposed preliminaries should be agreeable to America, France would do very unhandsomely to defeat it by their refusal. I likewise think it the interest of France, because their interest leads them to go to a certain point, and no further. There is a disparity in the operation of the terms of the alliance on the part of France, and on the part of

America. The more vigorously France interposes, the better for America; in proportion to their exertions, they create, less or more, a diversion of the British force; this reasoning goes straight forward for America; but it is not so with France. There is a certain point to France, beyond which their work would fail, and recoil upon themselves; if they were to drive the British ministry totally to abandon the American war, it would become totally a French war. The events of a twelvemonth past seem to bear testimony to this course of reasoning. The disadvantage upon the bargain to America is, that the efficacy of the French alliance to them presupposes their continuance in the war. The demur to France is, that the liberation of their new ally recoils with double weight of the war upon themselves, without any ulterior points of advantage in view, as dependent upon that alliance. I think the interest of all parties coincides with the proposition of preliminaries.

The proposed preliminaries appear to me to be just and equitable to all parties; but the great object with me is, to come to some preliminaries. I could almost add, whatever those preliminaries might be, provided a suspension of arms for an adequate term of years were one, I think it would be ten thousand to one against any future renewal of the war. It is not necessary to enter at large into the reasons which induce me to think, that the British ministry, as well as the American plenipotentiary, would consent to the terms of the proposed preliminaries; for indeed I do not know, that I am founded in that opinion with respect to either, but still I believe it of both.

But what can a private person do in such a case, wishing to be a mediator for peace, having access to both parties, but equally uncertain of the reception of

his mediation on either side? I must hesitate to take any public step, as by a proposition in Parliament, or by any other means, to drive the parties to an explanation on any specific proposals; and yet I am very unwilling to let the session pass without some proposition, upon which the parties may meet, if they should be so inclined, as I suspect them to be. I have been endeavouring to feel pulses for some months, but all is dumb show. I cannot say that I meet with any thing discouraging, to my apprehension, either as to the equitableness or practicability of the proposition for preliminaries. If I could but simply receive sufficient encouragement, that I should not run any hazard of obstructing any other practicable propositions by obtruding mine, I should be very much satisfied to come forward in that case with mine, to furnish a beginning at least, which might lead to peace.

There is nothing that I wish so much, as to have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with you, having many things to say to you; but, if that cannot yet happen, I have only to say, that whatever communication you may think proper to make to me, which may lead to peace, you may be assured that I shall be most strenuous in applying it to that end. In all cases of difficulty in human life, there must be confidence somewhere, to enable us to extricate nations from the evils attendant upon national disputes, as they arise out of national passions, jealousies, and points of honor. I am not sure, whether the extreme caution and diffidence of persons in political life be not the cause, almost as frequently, of the unnecessary protraction of the miseries of war, as of the final production of any superior good to any state. Peace now is better than peace a twelvemonth hence, at least by all the lives that may be lost in the mean while, and by

all the accumulated miseries that may intervene by that delay. When I speak of the necessity of confidence, I would not have you think, that I trust to all professions, promiscuously, with confidence; my thoughts are free respecting all parties; and for myself, if I thought it necessary for the end of attaining any additional confidence in your esteem, to enable me to coöperate the more effectually towards the restoration of peace, there is nothing that I would wish you to be assured of but this; that no fallacious offers of insincerity, nor any pretexts for covering secret designs, or for obtaining unfair advantages, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me truly to be, not only a lover of my country, but a sincere friend to peace and to the rights of mankind; and ever most affectionately yours,

D. HARTLEY.

Observations by Mr. Hartley.

Lord North consented to Mr. Hartley's proposition, for endeavouring to procure from the American plenipotentiary or plenipotentiaries some opening, that they would be willing to commence a parley, on propositions of peace between Great Britain and America; and supposed the terms, which Mr. Hartley had in view, would be something like a tacit cession of independence to America, with a truce for a certain term of years, to serve as a basis for a general treaty of accommodation and final settlement.

This last application (which was made on the 20th of April, 1779,) of Mr. Hartley to Lord North, after several previous conferences on the subject, is the ground of the present confidential communication with Dr. Franklin, on the part of Mr. Hartley, who states to

Dr. Franklin, as he did to Lord North, that an auspicious beginning of a negotiation is *dimidium facti.*

Mr. Hartley's ideas of the probable course of the negotiation would be to the following effect;

1. Five commissioners (or any three of them) to be appointed on the part of his Britannic Majesty to treat, consult, and agree upon the final settlement and pacification of the present troubles, upon safe, honorable, and permanent terms, subject to ratification by Parliament.

2. That any one of the aforesaid commissioners may be empowered to agree, as a preliminary, to a suspension of hostilities by sea and land, for a certain term of five or seven years.

3. That any one of the aforesaid commissioners be empowered to agree, as a second preliminary, to suspend the operation and effect of any and all acts of Parliament respecting America, for a certain term of five or seven years.

4. That it is expected, as a third preliminary, that America should be released, free and unengaged, from any treaties with foreign powers, which may tend to embarrass or defeat the present proposed negotiation.

5. That a general treaty for negotiation shall be set on foot as soon as may be, after the agreement of the foregoing preliminaries.

N. B. A doubt seeming to arise from Lord North, relative to the probability of any explanatory communication on the part of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Hartley expressed, he thought it possible, that, as a known friend to peace, he might be considered by Dr. Franklin as a depot of any communications, which may serve from time to time to facilitate the terms of peace; which therefore prevents this communication from being con-

sidered as any direct overture from Lord North to Dr. Franklin, or from Dr. Franklin to Lord North; but as it is merely a mediatorial proposition of Mr. Hartley, as a private person, for the purpose of bringing the parties to a parley.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Plan of an Expedition in which the Marquis de Lafayette was to join.

Passy, 27 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have, at the request of M. de Sartine, postponed the sending of the *Alliance* to America, and have ordered her to proceed immediately from Nantes to L'Orient, where she is to be furnished with her complement of men, to join your little squadron, and act under your command.

The Marquis de Lafayette will be with you soon. It has been observed, that joint expeditions of land and sea forces often miscarry, through jealousies and misunderstandings between the officers of the different corps. This must happen, where there are little minds, actuated more by personal views of profit or honor to themselves, than by the warm and sincere desire of good to their country. Knowing you both, as I do, and your just manner of thinking on these occasions, I am confident nothing of the kind can happen between you, and that it is unnecessary for me to recommend to either of you that condescension, mutual good will, and harmony, which contribute so much to success in such undertakings.

I look upon this expedition as an introduction only to greater trusts, and more extensive commands, and

as a kind of trial of both your abilities, and of your fitness in temper and disposition for acting in concert with others. I flatter myself, therefore, that nothing will happen that may give impressions to the disadvantage of either of you, when greater affairs shall come under consideration. As this is understood to be an American expedition, under the Congress' commission and colors, the Marquis, who is a major-general in that service, has of course the step in point of rank, and he must have command of the land forces, which are committed by the King to his care; but the command of the ships will be entirely in you; in which I am persuaded, that, whatever authority his rank might in strictness give him, he will not have the least desire to interfere with you. There is honor enough to be got for both of you, if the expedition is conducted with a prudent unanimity. The circumstance is indeed a little unusual; for there is not only a junction of land and sea forces, but there is also a junction of Frenchmen and Americans, which increases the difficulty of maintaining a good understanding. A cool, prudent conduct in the chiefs is, therefore, the more necessary; and I trust neither of you will in that respect be deficient.* With my best wishes for your success, health, and honor, I remain, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* The expedition here referred to, which was intended to act on the coast of England, was at length changed by the French government. The following letter on the occasion was written by the Marquis de Lafayette to Paul Jones.

"Paris, 22 May, 1779.

"DEAR SIR,

"I dare say you will be very sorry to hear, that the King's dispositions concerning our plan have been quite altered, and that, instead of meeting you, I am now going to take the command of the King's regiment at Saintes. What will be further determined about your squadron is yet uncertain, and the ministers are to consult about it with

INSTRUCTIONS

To John Paul Jones, Commander of the American Squadron in the Service of the United States, now in the Port of L'Orient.

1st. His Majesty, having been pleased to grant some troops for a particular expedition proposed to annoy our common enemy, in which the sea-force under your command might have an opportunity of distinguishing itself, you are to receive on board the ships of war, and the other vessels destined for that purpose, the troops that shall present themselves to you, afford them such accommodation as may be most proper for preserving their health, and convey them to such port or place as their commander shall desire to land them at.

2dly. When the troops are landed you are to aid, by all means in your power, their operations, as they will be instructed in like manner to aid and support those you may make with your ships, that so by this concurrence and union of your different forces, all that such a compounded strength is capable of may be effected.

3dly. You are during the expedition never to depart from the troops, so as not to be able to protect them in case of a repulse; and at all events you are to endeavour to effect their complete reëmbarkation on board the ships and transports under your command, when the expedition shall be ended.

Dr. Franklin. Political and military reasons have occasioned the alteration of things, and I am only to tell you, my good friend, how sorry I feel, not to be a witness of your success, abilities, and glory.

"I hope every thing will be arranged for the best, and the more calculated for the common advantage. Be convinced, Sir, that nothing could gratify me more, than the pleasure of having again something of the kind to undertake with such an officer as Captain Jones. That occasion I shall ever wish for, and shall, I hope, find, before the end of the war. With the sincerest affection and esteem, I am, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

4thly. You are to bring to France all the English seamen you may happen to take prisoners, in order to complete the good work you have already made such progress in, of delivering by an exchange the rest of our countrymen now languishing in the gaols of Great Britain.

5thly. As many of your officers and people have lately escaped from English prisons, either in Europe or America, you are to be particularly attentive to their conduct towards the prisoners, which the fortune of war may throw into your hands; lest resentment of the more than barbarous usage by the English in many places towards the Americans should occasion a retaliation, and an imitation of what ought rather to be detested and avoided, for the sake of humanity and for the honor of our country.

6thly. In the same view, although the English have burnt, wantonly, many defenceless towns in America, you are not to follow this example, unless where a reasonable ransom is refused; in which case your own generous feelings, as well as this instruction, will induce you to give timely notice of your intention, that sick and ancient persons, women, and children, may be first removed.

Done at Passy, this 28th day of April, 1779.

B. FRANKLIN,

Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States to the Court of France.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Passy, 3 May, 1779.

SIR,

I did write to the gentleman at Nantes concerned in fitting out the vessels for America, offering them

the *Alliance* as a convoy, and ordered her to Nantes accordingly. They did not choose to accept that offer, knowing, as I suppose, her weakness, but sailed for Brest, to go with the French convoy, without waiting her arrival, and would probably have been gone long before she could have been fitted for sea, if contrary winds had not prevented. I wish your information were true, that she is manned, and fit for such service; it must be from some person who is unacquainted with the facts, perhaps Mr. Ford.

I must suppose the merchants are satisfied with the convoy they have put their ships under, as I do not learn that they have applied for one more suitable. I would readily have solicited such an application, if I had understood it to be necessary, being equally desirous with you of their arriving safe, and sensible of the importance of it. But I have not received a line from any of them to any such purpose; and Captain Landais has assured me, that my supposition of his having men enough to fight his ship on occasion, in going home, though not enough to man prizes on a cruise, was a great mistake in my informer; he then wanted one hundred and fifty men, and I have not since heard of her having recruited more than forty, with the exchanged Americans from England. Mr. Ford may probably be accommodated in the same frigate that will take Mr. Adams. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. I am glad to hear from you, that the supplies necessary for Virginia are shipped.

TO THOMAS VINY.

Passy, 4 May, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received with great pleasure your kind letter, as I learned by it that my hospitable friend still exists, and that his friendship for me has not abated.

We have had a hard struggle, but the Almighty has favored the just cause; and I join most heartily with you in your prayers, that he may perfect his work, and establish freedom in the new world, as an asylum for those of the old, who deserve it. I find that many worthy and wealthy families of this continent are determined to remove thither and partake of it, as soon as peace shall make the passage safer; for which peace I do also join your prayers most cordially, as I think the war a detestable one, and grieve much at the mischief and misery it occasions to many; my only consolation being, that I did all in my power to prevent it.

When all the bustle is over, if my short remainder of life will permit my return thither, what a pleasure will it be to me to see my old friend and his children settled there! I hope he will find vines and fig-trees there for all of them, under which we may sit and converse, enjoying peace and plenty, a good government, good laws, and liberty, without which men lose half their value. I am with much esteem, dear friend, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. PATIENCE WRIGHT.*

Passy, 4 May, 1779.

DEAR MADAM,

I received your favor of the 14th of March past, and, if you should continue in your resolution of returning to America, through France, I shall certainly render you any of the little services in my power; but there are so many difficulties at present in getting passages hence, particularly safe ones for women, that methinks I should advise your stay till more settled times, and till a more frequent intercourse is established.

As to the exercise of your art here, I am in doubt whether it would answer your expectations. Here are two or three who profess it, and make a show of their works on the Boulevards; but it is not the taste for persons of fashion to sit to these artists for their portraits; and both house rent and living at Paris are very expensive.

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* Mrs. Patience Wright was altogether a very extraordinary woman. She was the niece of the celebrated John Wesley, but was born at Philadelphia, in which city her parents settled at an early period. Mrs. Wright was greatly distinguished as a modeller in wax; which art she turned to a remarkable account in the American war, by coming to England, and exhibiting her performances. This enabled her to procure much intelligence of importance, which she communicated to Dr. Franklin and others, with whom she corresponded during the whole war. As soon as a general was appointed, or a squadron begun to be fitted out, the old lady found means of access to some family where she could gain information, and thus, without being at all suspected, she contrived to transmit an account of the number of the troops, and the place of their destination to her political friends abroad. She at one time had frequent access to Buckingham House; and used, it was said, to speak her sentiments very freely to their Majesties, who were amused with her originality. The great Lord Chatham honored her with his visits, and she took his likeness, which appears in Westminster Abbey Mrs. Wright died very old in February, 1786. — W. T. F.

I thought that friendship required I should acquaint you with these circumstances; after which you will use your discretion. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My grandson, whom you may remember when a little saucy boy at school, being my amanuensis in writing the within letter, has been diverting me with his remarks. He conceives, that your figures cannot be packed up without damage from any thing you could fill the boxes with to keep them steady. He supposes, therefore, that you must put them into post-chaises, two and two, which will make a long train upon the road, and be a very expensive conveyance; but, as they will eat nothing at the inns, you may the better afford it. When they come to Dover, he is sure they are so like life and nature, that the master of the packet will not receive them on board without passes; which you will do well therefore to take out from the Secretary's office, before you leave London; where they will cost you *only* the modest price of two guineas and sixpence each, which you will pay without grumbling, because you are sure the money will never be employed against your country. It will require, he says, five or six of the long wicker French stagecoaches to carry them as passengers from Calais to Paris, and a ship with good accommodations to convey them to America; where all the world will wonder at your clemency to Lord N——; that, having it in your power to hang, or send him to the lighters, you had generously reprieved him for transportation.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Relative to Propositions for a Peace.

Passy, 4 May, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received your several favors, viz. one of April the 10th, one of the 20th, and two of the 22d, all on the same day, but by different conveyances.

I need not repeat, what we have each of us so often repeated, the wish for peace. I will begin, by frankly assuring you, that, though I think a direct, immediate peace, the best mode of present accommodation for Britain, as well as for America, yet, if that *is not* at this time practicable, and a truce is practicable, I should not be against a truce; but this is merely on motives of *general humanity*, to obviate the evils men devilishly inflict on men in time of war, and to lessen as much as possible the similarity of earth and hell. For with regard to particular advantages, respecting the States I am connected with, I am persuaded it is theirs to continue the war, till England shall be reduced to that perfect impotence of mischief, which alone can prevail with her to let other nations enjoy "*Peace, Liberty, and Safety.*" I think, however, that a *short* truce, which must, therefore, be an *armed* truce, and put all parties to an almost equal expense with a continued war, is by no means desirable.

But this proposition of a truce, if made at all, should be made to France at the same time it is made to America. They have each of them too much honor, as well as too much sense, to listen separately to any propositions which tend to separate them from each other.

I will now give you my thoughts on your ideas of

a negotiation, in the order you have placed them. If you will number them in your copy, you will readily see to which my observations refer, and I may therefore be the more concise.

*To the 1st,** — I do not see the necessity or use of five commissioners. A number of talkers lengthens discussions, and often embarrasses instead of aiding a settlement. Their different particular views, private interests, and jealousies of each other, are likewise so many rubs in the way; and it sometimes happens, that a number cannot agree to what each privately thinks reasonable, and would have agreed to, or perhaps proposed, if alone. But this as the parties please.

To the 2d, — The term of twenty-one years would be better for all sides. The suspension of hostilities should be expressed to be between all parties at war; and that the British troops and ships of war now in any of the United States be withdrawn.

To the 3d, — This seems needless, and is a thing that may be done or omitted as you please; America has no concern about those acts of Parliament.

To the 4th, — The reason of proposing this is not understood, nor the use of it, nor what inducement there can be for us to agree to it. When you come to treat with both your enemies, you may negotiate away as much of these engagements as you can; but powers, who have made a firm, solid league, evidently useful to both, can never be prevailed with to dissolve it for the vague expectation of another *in nubibus;* nor even on the certainty, that another will be proposed, without knowing what are to be its articles. America has no desire of being free from her engagements to France. The chief is, that of continuing the

* See above, p. 336.

war in conjunction with her, and not making a separate peace; and this is an obligation not in the power of America to dissolve, being an obligation of *gratitude and justice* towards a nation, which is engaged in a war on her account and for her protection; and would be for ever binding, whether such an article existed or not in the treaty; and, though it did not exist, an honest American would cut off his right hand, rather than sign an agreement with England contrary to the spirit of it.

To the 5th, — As soon as you please.

If you had mentioned France in your proposed suspension of arms, I should have immediately shown it to the minister, and have endeavoured to support that idea. As it stands, I am in doubt whether I shall communicate your paper or not, though by your writing it so fair it seems as if you intended it. If I do, I shall acquaint you with the result.

The bill, of which you send me a copy, was an excellent one at the time, and might have had great and good effects, if, instead of telling us haughtily, that our humble petition should receive no answer, the ministry had received and enacted that bill into a law. It might have erected a wall of brass round England, if such a measure had been adopted, when Friar Bacon's brazen head cried out, TIME IS! But the wisdom of it was not seen, till after the fatal cry of TIME 'S PAST! I am, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO GENERAL BECKWITH.*

Discouraging his Project of joining the American Army.

Passy, 17 May, 1779.

SIR,

Having assured you verbally, that I had no authority to treat or agree with any military person, of any rank whatever, to go to America, I understand your expressions, that "*you will take your chance, if I think you may be useful,*" to mean, that you will go over without making any terms with me, on a supposition, which you also mention, that my recommendation will be regarded by the Congress, and that you shall thereupon be employed in our armies.

Whoever has seen the high character given of you by Prince Ferdinand (under whom you served) to Lord Chatham, which I saw when in London, must think that so able an officer might have been exceedingly useful to our cause, if he had been in America at the beginning of the war. But there is a great difficulty at this time in introducing one of your rank into our armies, now that they are all arranged and fully officered; and this kind of difficulty has been found so great, and the Congress has been so embarrassed with numbers of officers from other countries, who arrived under strong recommendations, that they have been at above one hundred thousand livres expense to pay the charges of such officers in coming to America and returning to Europe, rather than haz-

* General Beckwith had distinguished himself in the battle of Minden, and he served afterwards in Germany. He sent to Dr. Franklin a copy of a letter, written by Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick to the Earl of Chatham, in 1767, highly commendatory of his character and military skill.

ard the discontent, the placing them, to the prejudice of our own officers who had served from the beginning, would have occasioned.

Under these circumstances they have not merely left me without authority, but they have in express terms forbid me to agree with or encourage by any means, the going over of officers to America in expectation of employment. As to my recommendation, whatever weight it might have had formerly, it has in several instances been so improperly employed through the too great confidence I had in recommendations from others, that I think it would at present be of no importance, if it were necessary; but after that above mentioned of so great a general, and so good a judge of military merit as Prince Ferdinand, a character of you from me would be impertinence.

Upon the whole, I can only say, that, if you choose to go over and settle in our land of liberty, I shall be glad to find you there on my return as a fellow citizen, because I believe you will be a very good one, and respected there as such by the people. But I cannot advise or countenance your going thither with the expectation you mention. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Receives his Credentials as Minister Plenipotentiary. — Presented to the King. — Paul Jones's Squadron. — Prisoners. — Necker. — Lee and Izard. — Consuls. — Barbary Powers. — Spain. — France.

Passy, 26 May, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

The Marquis de Lafayette, who arrived here the 11th of February, brought me yours of October 28th, and the new commission, credentials, and instructions, which the Congress have honored me with. I have not since had an opportunity of writing, that I could trust; for I see, by several instances, the orders given to private captains to throw their despatches into the sea, when likely to be taken, are sometimes neglected, and sometimes so badly executed, that the letters are recovered by the enemy, and much inconvenience has attended their interception. You mention, that you should speedily have opportunities of forwarding duplicates and triplicates of the papers; none of them has ever come to hand, nor have I received any other line from you of later date.

I immediately acquainted the minister of foreign affairs with my appointment, and communicated to him, as usual, a copy of my credential letter, on which a day was named for my reception. A fit of the gout prevented my attendance at that time, and for some weeks after; but, as soon as I was able to go through the ceremony, I went to Versailles, and was presented to the King, and received in all the forms. I delivered the letter of Congress into his Majesty's own hands, who, in the most gracious manner, expressed his satisfaction. And I have since constantly attended

the levee every Tuesday, with the other foreign ministers, and have taken every proper occasion of repeating the assurances I am instructed to give, of the grateful sentiments of Congress, and their determined resolution to fulfil religiously their engagements. Much pains is constantly taken by the enemy to weaken the confidence of this court in their new allies, by representing our people as weary of the war, and of the government of Congress; which body, too, they represent as distracted by dissensions, &c.; but all this has very little effect, and, when on some occasions it has seemed to make a little impression, and create some apprehensions, I have not found it difficult to remove them. And it is my firm opinion, that, notwithstanding the great losses suffered by the commerce of this kingdom, since the commencement of the war, the disposition of the court to continue it (till its purpose of establishing our independence is completed) is not the least changed, nor their regard for us diminished.

The end of that part of the instructions, which relates to American seamen taken by the French in English ships, had already been obtained, Captain Jones having had for some time an order from court, directed to the keepers of the prisoners, requiring them to deliver to him such Americans as should be found in their hands, that they might be at liberty to serve under his command. Most of them have accordingly been delivered to him, if not all. The minister of the marine, having entertained a high opinion of him, from his conduct and bravery in taking the *Drake*, was desirous of employing him in the command of a particular enterprise, and to that end requested us to spare him, which we did, and sent the *Ranger* home, under the command of his lieutenant. Various accidents have hitherto postponed his equipment, but

he now has the command of a fifty-gun ship with some frigates, all under American commissions and colors, fitted out at the King's expense, and will sail, it is said, about the 1st of June.

The Marquis de Lafayette was, with some land troops, to have gone with him; but I now understand the Marquis is not to go, the plan being a little changed.

The *Alliance* being weakly manned at first, and the captain judging it necessary to be freed from thirty-eight of his men, who had been concerned in a conspiracy, and unwilling to take French seamen, I thought it best to send him directly home, as his ship might be of some protection to the vessels then about sailing to America, and Mr. Adams, who was desirous of returning soon, might be accommodated with a passage in a swift-sailing vessel. I accordingly offered her as a convoy to the trade at Nantes; but the gentlemen concerned did not think fit to wait for getting ready, as a French convoy offered, for at least part of the voyage; and, the minister requesting she might be added to Captain Jones's little squadron, and offering to give a passage to Mr. Adams in the frigate with the new ambassador, and to complete the *Alliance's* complement of men, I thought it best to continue her a little longer in Europe, hoping she may, in the projected cruise, by her extraordinary swiftness, be a means of taking prisoners enough to redeem the rest of our countrymen, now in the English gaols. With this view, as well as to oblige the minister, I ordered her to join Captain Jones at L'Orient, and obey his orders, where she is now accordingly.

There have been great misunderstandings between the officers of that ship and their captain, and great discontents among the men for want of clothes and money. I have been obliged to make great advances

to appease those discontents, and I now hope the authority and prudence of Captain Jones will be able to remove, or at least to prevent, the ill effects of those misunderstandings. The conspirators are detained in prison, and will remain there, subject to such directions as Congress may think fit to give concerning them. The courts here would not, because they properly could not, undertake to try them; and we had not captains enough to make a court-martial for the purpose. The sending them to America, with evidence to convict them, will be a great trouble and expense; and perhaps their offence cannot be so clearly made out, as to justify a punishment sufficient to deter by its exemplary severity Possibly, the best use, that can be made of them, is to give them in exchange for as many Americans in the cartel now operating here. The perfidious conduct of the English and Scotch sailors in our service, a good deal discourages the idea of taking them out of those prisons in order to employ them.

This cartel is at length brought about by the indefatigable endeavours of an old friend of mine, and a long declared one to America, Mr. Hartley, member of Parliament for Hull. The ship employed has already brought us one cargo from the prison at Plymouth. The number was intended for a hundred, but proved ninety-seven, and she is returned with as many in exchange, to bring us a second number from the prison at Portsmouth. This is to continue till all are exchanged. The Americans are chiefly engaged with Captain Jones and Landais. This exchange is the more remarkable, as our people were all committed as for high treason.

Agreeably to the seventh instruction, I have earnestly recommended the reduction of Halifax and Quebec.

The Marquis de Lafayette joined me warmly in the application for this purpose, and I hope we shall in due time see some good effects from it. I have also in various ways, and through different channels, laid before the ministry the distressed state of our finances in America. There seems a great willingness in all of them to help us, except in the controller, M. Necker, who is said not to be well disposed towards us, and is supposed to embarrass every measure proposed to relieve us by grants of money. It is certain, that under the resolution, perhaps too hastily declared, of the King's imposing no new taxes on his subjects for this year, the court has great difficulties in defraying present expense, the vast exertions to put the navy in a condition to equal that of England having cost immense sums.

There is also a prevailing opinion, that the most effectual service to us is to be expected from rendering their marine superior to that of England. The King has, however, to encourage our loan in Holland, been so good as to engage, under his hand, to be security for our payment of the interest of three millions of livres; but that loan has not yet amounted to more than about eighty thousand florins. Dr. Price, whose assistance was requested by Congress, has declined that service, as you will see by the copy of his letter enclosed.* To me it seems, that the measure recommended by the wisdom of Congress, for diminishing the quantity of paper by taxes of large nominal sums, must have very salutary effects.

* Congress had passed the following resolution, October 6th, 1778.

"*Resolved*, That the Honorable Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, or any of them, be directed forthwith to apply to Dr. Price, and inform him, that it is the desire of Congress to consider him a citizen of the United States, and to receive his assistance in regulating their finances. That, if he shall think it expedient to remove

As to your finances here, it is fit that you should know the state of them. When the Commissioners of Congress made the proposition of paying the interest at Paris of the money borrowed in America, they understood the loan to be of five millions of dollars. They obtained from government sums more than sufficient for the interest of such a sum. That sum has been increased; and, if they could otherwise have provided for it, they have been from time to time drained by a number of unforeseen expenses, of which the Congress had no knowledge, and of others, occasioned by their orders and drafts; and the cargoes sent to the Commissioners by the Committee have some of them been treacherously run away with by the seamen, or taken by the enemy, or, when arrived, have been hitherto applied toward the payment of debts, the tobaccos to the farmers-general according to contract, and the rice and indigo to Messrs. Hortalez & Co., from whom, by the way, we have not yet been able to procure any account.

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with his family to America, and afford such assistance, a generous provision shall be made for requiting his services."

The Commissioners forwarded this resolve to Dr. Price, who replied as follows.

"Dr. Price returns his best thanks to the Honorable Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Lee, and John Adams, for conveying to him the resolution of Congress of the 6th of October last, by which he is invited to become a member of the United States, and to give his assistance in regulating their finances. It is not possible for him to express the sense he has of the honor, which this resolution does him, and the satisfaction with which he reflects on the favorable opinion of him which has occasioned it. But he knows himself not to be sufficiently qualified for giving such assistance; and he is so connected in this country, and also advancing so fast in the evening of life, that he cannot think of a removal. He requests the favor of the Honorable Commissioners to transmit this reply to Congress, with assurances that Dr. Price feels the warmest gratitude for the notice taken of him, and that he looks to the American States, as *now* the hope, and likely *soon* to become the refuge of mankind." — *London, January 18th*, 1779.

I have lately employed an accountant, the son of our banker, to form complete books of our accounts, to be sent to Congress. They are not yet ready. When they are, I shall send them by the first safe opportunity. In the mean time, I may just mention some particulars of our disbursements. Great quantities of clothing, arms, ammunition, and naval stores, sent from time to time; payment of bills from Mr. Bingham, one hundred thousand livres; Congress bills in favor of Haywood & Co., above two hundred thousand; advanced to Mr. Ross, about twenty thousand pounds sterling; paid Congress drafts in favor of returned officers, ninety-three thousand and eighty livres; to our prisoners in England, and after their escape to help them home, and to other Americans here in distress, a great sum, I cannot at present say how much; supplies to Mr. Hodge for fitting out Captain Conyngham, very considerable; for the freight of ships to carry over the supplies, great sums; to Mr. William Lee and Mr. Izard, five thousand five hundred pounds sterling; and for fitting the frigates *Raleigh*, *Alfred*, *Boston*, *Providence*, *Alliance*, *Ranger*, &c., I imagine not less than sixty or seventy thousand livres each, taken one with another; and for the maintenance of the English prisoners, I believe, when I get in all the accounts, I shall find one hundred thousand livres not sufficient, having already paid above sixty-five thousand on that article. And now, the drafts of the treasurer of the loans coming very fast upon me, the anxiety I have suffered, and the distress of mind lest I should not be able to pay them, have for a long time been very great indeed.

To apply again to this court for money for a particular purpose, which they had already over and over again provided for and furnished us, was extremely

awkward. I therefore repeated the *general* applications, which we had made when together, for aids of money; and received the general answers, that the expense of government for the navy was so great, that at present it was exceedingly difficult to furnish the necessary supplies; that France, by sending a fleet to America, obliged the enemy to divide their forces, and left them so weak on the continent, as to aid us by lessening our expense, if it could not by giving us money, &c. &c.; and I was asked if we did not receive money from Spain. I know, indeed, of some money received from thence, and I have heard of more, but know not how much, Mr. Arthur Lee, as minister for Spain, having taken to himself all the management of that affair, and will account to Congress. I only understand, that there is none of it left to assist in paying Congress bills.

I at length obtained, as above mentioned, the King's *bon* for payment of the interest of three millions, if I could borrow it in Holland, or elsewhere; but, though two eminent houses in Amsterdam have undertaken it, and had hopes of success, they have both lately written to me, that the great demands of money for Germany and for England had raised interest above our limits, and that the successes of the English in Georgia and St. Lucia, and in destroying the French trade, with the supposed divisions in Congress, all much magnified by the British minister, and the pressing application to borrow by several of our States separately, had made the moneyed people doubtful of our stability, as well as our ability to repay what might be lent us, and that it was necessary to wait a more favorable moment for proceeding with our loan.

In this situation, I have been applied to by Mr. William Lee, and lately, through our banker, by Mr. Izard,

for more money for their expenses; and I am told, there is much anger against me for declining to furnish them, and that I am charged with *disobeying an order of Congress*,* and with cruelly attempting to distress gentlemen, who are in the service of their country. They have, indeed, produced to me a resolve of Congress, *empowering them to draw* on the Commissioners in France for their expenses at foreign courts; and doubtless Congress, when that resolve was made, intended to enable us to pay those drafts; but, as that has not been done, and the gentlemen (except Mr. Lee for a few weeks) have not incurred any expense at foreign courts, and, if they had, the five thousand five hundred guineas, received by them in about nine months, seemed an ample provision for it, and as both of them might command money from England, I do not conceive that I *disobeyed an order* of Congress, and that, if I did, the circumstances will excuse it; and I could have no intention to distress them, because I must know it is out of my power, as their private fortunes and credit will enable them at all times to pay their own expenses.

In short, the dreadful consequences of ruin to our public credit, both in America and Europe, that must attend protesting a single Congress draft for interest, after our funds were out, would have weighed with me against the payment of more money to those gentlemen, if the demand had otherwise been well founded. I am, however, in the judgment of Congress; and, if I have done amiss, must submit dutifully to their censure. Thanks to God, I have this last week got over the difficulty, so far as relates to the bills, which will all be punctually paid; but if the Navy Board sends

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 446.

more ships here to be fitted, or the Congress continue to draw for the payment of other debts, the ships will be disappointed, and I shall probably be made a bankrupt, unless funds are at the same time sent over to discharge such demands.

With regard to the fitting out of ships, receiving and disposing of cargoes, and purchasing of supplies, I beg leave to mention, that, besides my being wholly unacquainted with such business, the distance I am from the ports renders my having any thing to do with it extremely inconvenient. Commercial agents have indeed been appointed by Mr. William Lee; but they and the captains are continually writing for my opinion or orders, or leave to do this or that, by which much time is lost to them, and much of mine taken up to little purpose, from my ignorance. I see clearly, however, that many of the captains are exorbitant in their demands, and in some cases I think those demands are too easily complied with by the agents, perhaps because the commissions are in proportion to the expense. I wish, therefore, the Congress would appoint the consuls they have a right to appoint by the treaty, and put into their hands all that sort of employment. I have in my desk, I suppose, not less than fifty applications from different ports, praying the appointment, and offering to serve gratis for the honor of it, and the advantage it gives in trade; but I imagine, that, if consuls are appointed, they will be of our own people from America, who, if they should make fortunes abroad, might return with them to their country.

The commissions demanded by the agents seem to me in some cases very high. For instance, Mr. Schweighauser, in a late account, charges five per cent on the simple delivery of the tobaccos to the officer of the farmers-general in the port, and by that means

makes the commission on the delivery of the two last cargoes amount to about six hundred and thirty pounds sterling. As there was no sale in the case, he has, in order to calculate the commission, valued the tobacco at ninety livres the hundred weight; whereas, it was, by our contract with the farmers, to be delivered at about forty livres. I got a friend, who was going upon change, to inquire among the merchants what was the custom in such cases of delivery. I send enclosed the result he has given me of his inquiries. In consequence, I have refused to pay the commission of five per cent on this article; and I know not why it was, as is said, agreed with him at the time of his appointment, that he should have five per cent on his transactions, if the custom is only two per cent, as by my information.

I have mentioned above the applications of separate States to borrow money in Europe, on which I beg leave to remark, that, when the General Congress are endeavouring to obtain a loan, these separate attempts interfere, and are extremely inconvenient, especially where some of the agents are empowered to offer a higher interest, and some have powers in that respect unlimited. We have likewise lately had applications from three several States to this court, to be furnished with great quantities of arms, ammunition, and clothing, or with money upon credit to buy them; and from one State to be supplied with naval stores and ships of war. These agents, finding that they had not interest to obtain such grants, have severally applied to me, and seem to think it my duty, as minister for the United States, to support and enforce their particular demands. I have endeavoured to do so; but I find the ministers do not like these separate applications, and seem to think, that they should properly come only

through Congress, to whom the several States in such cases ought first to make known their wants, and then the Congress could instruct their minister accordingly. This would save the King's ministers a good deal of trouble, and the several States the expense of these particular agents; concerning whom I would add a little remark, that we have in America, too readily, in various instances, given faith to the pretensions of strangers from Europe, who offer their services as persons who have powerful friends and great interest in their own country, and by that means obtain contracts, orders, or commissions, to procure what we want, and who, when they come here, are totally unknown, and have no other credit but what such commissions give them, or, if known, the commissions do not add so much to their credit as they diminish that of their employers.

I have received two letters from a Frenchman, settled in one of the ports of Barbary, offering himself to act as our minister with the Emperor, with whom he pretended to be intimate, and acquainting me, that his Imperial Majesty wondered we had never sent to thank him for being the first power on this side of the Atlantic that had acknowledged our independence, and opened his ports to us; advising that we should send the Emperor a present. On inquiry at the office in whose department Africa is included, I learned the character of this man to be such, that it was not safe to have any correspondence with him, and therefore I did not answer his letters. I suppose Congress has received the memorial we presented to this court respecting the Barbary States, and requesting the King's good offices with them, agreeably to the treaty; and also the answer, expressing the King's readiness to perform those good offices whenever the Congress

should send us instructions, and make provision for the necessary presents;"* or, if those papers have not yet got to hand, they will be found among the copies carried over by Mr. Adams, and therefore I only mention them by way of remembrance. Whenever a treaty with the Emperor is intended, I suppose some of our naval stores will be an acceptable present, and the expectation of continued supplies of such stores, a powerful motive for entering into and continuing a friendship.

I should send you copies of several other memorials and public papers; but, as Mr. Adams goes in the same ship, and has the whole of our transactions during his time, it is not so necessary by this vessel. The disposition of this nation in general continues friendly towards us and our cause; and I do not see the least diminution of it, except among the West India merchants and planters, whose losses have rendered them a little discontented. Spain has been long acting as a mediator, but arming all the time most vigorously. Her naval force is now very great indeed, and, as her last proposition of a long truce, in which America should be included and treated as independent in fact, though not expressly acknowledged as such, has been lately rejected by England, it is now thought, that her open junction with France in the war is not far distant.

The Commissioners here have a power in general terms to treat of peace, friendship, and commerce with European States, but I apprehend this is scarce explicit enough to authorize me to treat of such a truce, if the proposition should again come upon the *tapis*. I therefore wish the Congress to consider of it, and

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. I. pp. 431, 453, 462.

give such powers as may be necessary to whom they may think proper, that, if a favorable opportunity of making an advantageous treaty should offer, it may not be missed.

Admiral Arbuthnot, who was going to America with a large convoy and some troops, has been detained by a little attempt upon Jersey; and contrary winds, since that affair was over, have detained him further, till within these few days.

Since I began writing this letter, I have received a packet from the Committee, by way of Eustatia and Holland, sent by Mr. Lovell, containing his letters of December the 8th, January the 29th, and February the 8th, with one from the President, dated January the 3d. Several papers are mentioned as sent with them, and by other opportunities, but none are come to hand, except the resolution to postpone the attempt on Canada; and these are the first despatches received here since the date of those sent by the Marquis de Lafayette. I have just received a letter from Mr. Bingham, acquainting me, that the ship *Deane*, and the *General Gates*, are just arrived at Martinique, and apply to him to be careened, refitted, and procure a fresh supply of provisions; and that, though he has no orders, he must draw upon me for the expense. I think it right to acquaint you thus early, that I shall be obliged to protest his bills.

I have just obtained from his Majesty orders to the government of Guadaloupe, to make reasonable reparation to Captain Giddens of Newbury for the loss of his vessel, sunk in mistake by a battery of that island. Great preparations are making here, with much activity in all the seaports, taking up transports, and building small vessels, proper for the landing of troops, &c.; so that many think an invasion of England or

Ireland is intended. The intention, whatever it is, may change; but the opinion of such an intention, which seems to prevail in England, may tend to keep their troops and ships at home.

General and Lord Howe, Generals Cornwallis and Grey, Colonel Montresor, and Captain Hammond, and others, have formally given it as their opinion, in Parliament, that the conquest of America is impracticable. This week, as we hear, John Maxwell, Joseph Galloway, Andrew Allen, John Patterson, Theophilus Morris, Enoch Story, and Jabez Fisher, are to be examined to prove the contrary. One would think the first set were likely to be the best judges.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM.

Respecting Irish Emigrants to the United States.

Passy, 27 May, 1779.

Sir,

I should sooner have sent this passport, but that I hoped to have had the other from this court in time to send with it. If you should stay a few days in England, and will let me know how it may be directed to you, I can send it to you per post.

I received some time since a letter from a person at Belfast, informing me, that a great number of people in those parts were desirous of going to settle in America, if passports could be obtained for them and their effects, and referring me to you for future information. I shall always be ready to afford every

assistance and security in my power to such undertakings, when they are really meant, and are not merely schemes of trade with views of introducing English manufactures into America, under pretence of their being the substance of persons going there to settle.

I admire the spirit with which I see the Irish are at length determined to claim some share of that freedom of commerce, which is the right of all mankind, but which they have been so long deprived of by the abominable selfishness of their fellow subjects. To enjoy all the advantages of the climate, soil, and situation in which God and nature have placed us, is as clear a right as that of breathing; and can never be justly taken from men but as a punishment for some atrocious crime.

The English have long seemed to think it a right, which none could have but themselves. Their injustice has already cost them dear, and, if persisted in, will be their ruin. I have the honor to be with great esteem, Sir, &c. B. Franklin.

FROM WILLIAM JONES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Presenting a Translation of a pretended Fragment of Polybius.

28 May, 1779.

Mr. Jones presents his best respects to Dr. Franklin. Since I had the honor of seeing you last, I amused myself with the enclosed translation of a curious *Fragment of Polybius;* which, as it may possibly afford you also some little amusement, I take the liberty of sending to you.

It will be both an honor and a pleasure to Mr. Paradise and myself to be charged with any commis-

sions, letters, or messages, that you may have for England. We leave Paris on Wednesday morning.

My friend will always remember with gratitude the kindness you have shown him. Accept my hearty thanks for your obliging attention to me, and be assured of my eternal veneration and esteem.*

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* The writer of this note was the celebrated Sir William Jones. The object of his visit to Paris at this time is not known; but it is supposed to have been political, and the "Fragment of Polybius," which he sent to Dr. Franklin, would seem to give countenance to such an opinion.

The following notes, in Mr. Jones's handwriting, are found among Dr. Franklin's papers.

"*Hotel du Port Mahon, Rue Jacob, May 20th*, 1779. — Mr. Paradise and Mr. Jones present their best respects to Dr. Franklin. They are just arrived at Paris; and, as they were desired by their worthy friends, Dr. Price and Dr. Priestley, to deliver to him their publications, they have left the books and letters at Passy, where they propose to have the honor of waiting upon the most respectable of patriots and philosophers, on any morning when they hear that he is likely to be at leisure."

"*June 1st*, 1779. — Mr. Paradise and Mr. Jones present their best respects to Dr. Franklin. Being informed that the King's passport was *absolutely* necessary for them to go out of France, they sent to Versailles for that purpose, and have just received the enclosed answer. May they trouble his Excellency to insert in his passport what they seem to want, namely, that Mr. Paradise is an American gentleman, *born in Greece*, (if *où ils sont nés* must be taken literally,) and that Mr. Jones is an Englishman with one *valet de chambre*. They are ashamed of giving his Excellency this trouble, and wish him perfect health and happiness."

"*Calais, June 5th*, 1779. — Mr. Paradise and Mr Jones present their respects to Dr. Franklin. They cannot leave France without repeating their hearty thanks for the kind attention, with which he received them at Passy, and the agreeable hours which they have spent in his company. They arrived here yesterday in very good time, and are to embark for England in two hours, an advantage which they owe to his kindness in procuring a pass from Versailles with so much expedition. They are much obliged to him for returning his own pass, which, even if it should not be immediately useful to them on the passage, will be a valuable testimony of his friendship. They will carefully deliver his two letters, and will make his friends happy with an account of his health, a long continuance of which, with all possible prosperity, they wish him from the bottom of their hearts May the wisdom and virtues of their excellent and respectable friend secure the liberty of

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Currency. — Charges of Lee and Izard. — Luzerne.

Passy, 2 June, 1779.

Sir,

I received a few days since, via Eustatia and Holland, the triplicates of your several favors, of December

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those, who now enjoy it, and teach those, who have it not, to know its value."

Mr. Jones visited France several times during the war. Lord Teignmouth says, he made a journey to Paris in the summer of 1779, and in the autumn of 1780. *Life of Sir William Jones*, 2d ed., p. 188. He was there also in 1782, while the Commissioners were negotiating the treaty of peace. This last visit was connected with a project for going to America, with his friend Mr. Paradise, on some affair of business, which is partly explained by the following extract from a letter, written by Mr. Jones to Mr. Baron Eyre, and dated October 2d, 1782.

"I have been in England about a fortnight. The cause of my return is, in a few words, this; I ought to have foreseen, what I nevertheless did not expect, that the same timidity or imbecility, which made my unhappy friend declare, that he neither could nor would go to Virginia without me, would make him declare, when he saw the sails and the waves, that he neither could nor would go at all. A dread of some imaginary danger so enervated him, that he kept his bed, and wrote me word, that, if he stayed a week longer at Nantes, he should lose his reason or his life. My expostulations had some little effect, but there was no dependence, I found, on a man who had none, he confessed, on himself; and, when I discovered, that no ship, with even tolerable accommodations, would sail till September, so that I could not keep my word with my friends in England, by returning from America before the new year, I came back through Normandy about the middle of August, and, having a few weeks to spare, made a very pleasant and improving excursion into Holland, which I traversed from south to north."

It was supposed by some in Paris, that this scheme of going to America had a political end in relation to the treaty, but this has neither been proved nor explained; nor is it easy to conceive, that the British government could have entertained hopes of any results from such a secret mission at this stage of the controversy. Dr. Franklin had been acquainted with Mr. Jones in England, not only as a Fellow of the Royal Society, but as an intimate acquaintance of the Shipley family. Mr. Jones afterwards married Anna Maria Shipley, daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph.

See the Fragment of Polybius in the Appendix, No. I.

the 8th, January the 29th, and February the 8th. The preceding copies of the same dates never came to hand. I thank you very much for the newspapers, though the disputes I see in them give me pain. You observe rightly, that the want of good conveyances obstructs much the punctuality of your correspondence. The number of long letters I have written to America has almost discouraged me from writing, except by such an opportunity as this. You may judge of the uncertainty of your letters getting to hand, when I tell you, that though you mention having sent me quadruplicates of my credentials, only those by the Marquis de Lafayette have yet appeared.

I am glad to understand, that you are taking measures to restore the value of your money, by taxing largely to reduce the quantity. I believe no financier in the world can put you upon a more effectual method. The English have had a little flow of spirits, lately, from their success against the trade of France, and the news of the imagined conquest of Georgia; but the growing apprehension of a war with Spain, also, begins to sober them, and, like people who have been drunk with drams, they now seem to have both the head and the heart ache. The late letters from thence are in a more humble style, and some printed papers by the last post, known to be ministerial, appear intended to prepare the minds of the people for propositions of peace. But these ebbs and flows are common with them, and the duration of neither is to be relied on.

As I do not find, by any of yours, that a long letter of mine to you in July last, has come to hand, I send you herewith a copy of it (though now a little stale), as it serves to show my continued good opinion of a gentleman, who, by the papers you have sent me,

seems to be hardly used. I have never meddled with the dispute between him and Mr. Lee, but the suspicion of having a good will to him has drawn upon me a great deal of ill will from his antagonist. The Congress have wisely enjoined the ministers in Europe to agree with one another. I had always resolved to have no quarrel, and have, therefore, made it a constant rule to answer no angry, affronting, or abusive letters, of which I have received many, and long ones, from Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard, who, I understand, and see indeed by the papers, have been writing liberally, or rather illiberally, against me, to prevent, as one of them says here, any impressions my writings against them might occasion to their prejudice; but I have never before mentioned them in any of my letters

Our scheme here for packet boats did not continue.* I wish Congress could fall upon some method of sending some little light vessels once a month, to keep up a correspondence more regular. Even the receiving of letters of a certain date, though otherwise of no importance, might serve to refute the false news of our adversaries on both sides of the water, which have sometimes too long their intended effect before the truth arrives. I see that frequently little pilot boats, of twenty-five or thirty tons' burden, arrive safe from Virginia; the expense of such would not be great.

I beg leave to recommend earnestly to your civilities M. le Chevalier de la Luzerne, who goes over to succeed M. Gérard, as the King's minister to the Congress. He bears here a most amiable character, has great connexions, and is a hearty friend to the American cause. With great esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 284.

TO HORATIO GATES.*

Chevalier de Raymondis. — Capitulation of Saratoga. — Dissensions in America.

Passy, 2 June, 1779

DEAR SIR,

I received your obliging letter by the Chevalier de Raymondis, who appears extremely sensible of the civilities he received at Boston, and very desirous of being serviceable to the American cause. His wound is not yet right, as he tells me there is a part of the bone still to be cut off. But he is otherwise well and cheerful, and has a great respect for you.

The pride of England was never so humbled by any thing as by your capitulation of Saratoga. They have not yet got over it, though a little elevated this spring by their success against the French commerce. But the growing apprehension of having Spain too upon their hands has lately brought them down to an humble seriousness, that begins to appear even in ministerial discourses, and the papers of ministerial writers. All the happy effects of that transaction for America are not generally known. I may some time or other acquaint the world with some of them. When shall we meet again in cheerful converse, talk over our adventures, and finish with a quiet game of chess?

The little dissensions between particular States in America are much magnified in England, and they once had great hopes from them. I consider them, with you, as the effects of apparent security; which do not affect the grand points of independence, and adherence to treaties; and which will vanish at a re-

* At this time Major-General in the American army.

newed appearance of danger. This court continues heartily our friend, and the whole nation are warm in our favor; excepting only a few West Indians, and merchants in that trade, whose losses make them a little uneasy. With sincere and great esteem and affection, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO RICHARD BACHE.

Respecting certain Persons, who had attempted to injure him. — His Grandsons.

Passy, 2 June, 1779.

—— I am very easy about the efforts Messrs. L—— and —— are using, as you tell me, to injure me on that side of the water. I trust in the justice of the Congress, that they will listen to no accusations against me, that I have not first been acquainted with, and had an opportunity of answering. I know those gentlemen have plenty of ill will to me, though I have never done to either of them the smallest injury, or given the least just cause of offence. But my too great reputation, and the general good will this people have for me, and the respect they show me, and even the compliments they make me, all grieve those unhappy gentlemen; unhappy indeed in their tempers, and in the dark, uncomfortable passions of jealousy, anger, suspicion, envy, and malice. It is enough for good minds to be affected at other people's misfortunes; but they, that are vexed at everybody's good luck, can never be happy. I take no other revenge of such enemies, than to let them remain in the miserable situation in which their malignant natures have placed them, by endeavouring to support an estimable

character; and thus, by continuing the reputation the world has hitherto indulged me with, I shall continue them in their present state of damnation; and I am not disposed to reverse my conduct for the alleviation of their torments.

I am surprised to hear, that my grandson, Temple Franklin, being with me, should be an objection against me, and that there is a cabal for removing him. Methinks it is rather some merit, that I have rescued a valuable young man from the danger of being a Tory, and fixed him in honest republican Whig principles; as I think, from the integrity of his disposition, his industry, his early sagacity, and uncommon abilities for business, he may in time become of great service to his country. It is enough that I have lost my *son;* would they add my *grandson?* An old man of seventy, I undertook a winter voyage at the command of the Congress, and for the public service, with no other attendant to take care of me. I am continued here in a foreign country, where, if I am sick, his filial attention comforts me, and, if I die, I have a child to close my eyes and take care of my remains. His dutiful behaviour towards me, and his diligence and fidelity in business, are both pleasing and useful to me. His conduct, as my private secretary, has been unexceptionable, and I am confident the Congress will never think of separating us.

I have had a great deal of pleasure in Ben too.* He is a good, honest lad, and will make, I think, a valuable man. He had made as much proficiency in his learning, as the boarding school he was at could well afford him; and, after some consideration where to find a better for him, I at length fixed on sending

* Mr. Bache's eldest son.

him to Geneva. I had a good opportunity by a gentleman of that city, who had a place for him in his chaise, and has a son about the same age at the same school. He promised to take care of him, and enclosed I send you the letters I have since received relating to him and from him. He went very cheerfully, and I understand is very happy. I miss his company on Sundays at dinner. But, if I live, and I can find a little leisure, I shall make the journey next spring to see him, and to see at the same time *the old thirteen United States* of Switzerland.

Thanks be to God, I continue well and hearty. Undoubtedly I grow older, but I think the last ten years have made no great difference. I have sometimes the gout, but they say that is not so much a disease as a remedy. God bless you. I am your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. SARAH BACHE.

Passy, 3 June, 1779.

DEAR SALLY,

I have before me your letters of October 22d and January 17th. They are the only ones I received from you in the course of eighteen months. If you knew how happy your letters make me, and considered how many miscarry, I think you would write oftener.

I am much obliged to the Miss Cliftons for the kind care they took of my house and furniture. Present my thankful acknowledgments to them, and tell them I wish them all sorts of happiness.

The clay medallion of me you say you gave to Mr. Hopkinson was the first of the kind made in France. A variety of others have been made since of different sizes; some to be set in the lids of snuffboxes, and

some so small as to be worn in rings; and the numbers sold are incredible. These, with the pictures, busts, and prints, (of which copies upon copies are spread everywhere,) have made your father's face as well known as that of the moon, so that he durst not do any thing that would oblige him to run away, as his phiz would discover him wherever he should venture to show it. It is said by learned etymologists, that the name *doll*, for the images children play with, is derived from the word IDOL. From the number of *dolls* now made of him, he may be truly said, *in that sense*, to be *i-doll-ized* in this country.

I think you did right to stay out of town till the summer was over, for the sake of your child's health. I hope you will get out again this summer, during the hot months; for I begin to love the dear little creature from your description of her.

I was charmed with the account you gave me of your industry, the tablecloths of your own spinning, &c.; but the latter part of the paragraph, that you had sent for linen from France because weaving and flax were grown dear, alas, that dissolved the charm; and your sending for long black pins, and lace, and *feathers!* disgusted me as much as if you had put salt into my strawberries. The spinning, I see, is laid aside, and you are to be dressed for the ball! You seem not to know, my dear daughter, that, of all the dear things in this world, idleness is the dearest, except mischief.

The project you mention, of removing Temple from me was an unkind one. To deprive an old man, sent to serve his country in a foreign one, of the comfort of a child to attend him, to assist him in health and take care of him in sickness, would be cruel, if it was practicable. In this case it could not be done; for, as the pretended suspicions of him are groundless, and

his behaviour in every respect unexceptionable, I should not part with the child, but with the employment. But I am confident, that, whatever may be proposed by weak or malicious people, the Congress is too wise and too good to think of treating me in that manner.

Ben, if I should live long enough to want it, is like to be another comfort to me. As I intend him for a Presbyterian as well as a republican, I have sent him to finish his education at Geneva. He is much grown, in very good health, draws a little, as you will see by the enclosed, learns Latin, writing, arithmetic, and dancing, and speaks French better than English. He made a translation of your last letter to him, so that some of your works may now appear in a foreign language. He has not been long from me. I send the accounts I have of him, and I shall put him in mind of writing to you. I cannot propose to you to part with your own dear Will. I must one of these days go back to see him; happy to be once more all together! but futurities are uncertain. Teach him, however, in the mean time, to direct his worship more properly, for the deity of Hercules is now quite out of fashion.

The present you mention as sent by me was rather that of a merchant at Bordeaux; for he would never give me any account of it, and neither Temple nor I know any thing of the particulars.

When I began to read your account of the high prices of goods, "a pair of gloves seven dollars, a yard of common gauze twenty-four dollars, and that it now required a fortune to maintain a family in a very plain way," I expected you would conclude with telling me, that everybody as well as yourself was grown frugal and industrious; and I could scarce believe my eyes in reading forward, that "there never was so much

pleasure and dressing going on;" and that you yourself wanted black pins and feathers from France to appear, I suppose, in the mode! This leads me to imagine, that perhaps it is not so much that the goods are grown dear, as that the money is grown cheap, as every thing else will do when excessively plenty; and that people are still as easy nearly in their circumstances, as when a pair of gloves might be had for half a crown. The war indeed may in some degree raise the prices of goods, and the high taxes which are necessary to support the war may make our frugality necessary; and, as I am always preaching that doctrine, I cannot in conscience or in decency encourage the contrary, by my example, in furnishing my children with foolish modes and luxuries. I therefore send all the articles you desire, that are useful and necessary, and omit the rest; for, as you say you should "have great pride in wearing any thing I send, and showing it as your father's taste," I must avoid giving you an opportunity of doing that with either lace or feathers. If you wear your cambric ruffles as I do, and take care not to mend the holes, they will come in time to be lace; and feathers, my dear girl, may be had in America from every cock's tail.

If you happen again to see General Washington, assure him of my very great and sincere respect, and tell him, that all the old Generals here amuse themselves in studying the accounts of his operations, and approve highly of his conduct.

Present my affectionate regards to all friends that inquire after me, particularly Mr. Duffield and family, and write oftener, my dear child, to your loving father,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM GREENE, GOVERNOR OF RHODE ISLAND.

Passy, June, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of December 10th, with the bills of exchange for two hundred and sixteen dollars, and with the list of goods you would have in return. As I live far from any seaport, and am unacquainted with merchandise, I sent the bills with your order directly to my nephew at Nantes, who will, I doubt not, accomplish it to your satisfaction. I shall be glad of any opportunity of being serviceable to your son-in-law, both for your sake and his father's.

Your letter, with the first set of the bills, did not come to hand; which I regret the more, as by that means I have lost Mrs. Greene's letter, which you tell me was enclosed. Present my affectionate respects to her; and my love, with that of my grandson, to honest Ray; of whose welfare I am very glad to hear, and of his progress in his learning.

If my sister continues under your hospitable roof, let her know, that I hope to receive hers of the 7th that you mention. Tell her, I have not time now to write to her, but will by the next opportunity; and that I am well, and love her as well as ever. With great esteem and respect, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. If the Chevalier de la Luzerne should pass through your government, I recommend him warmly to your civilities. He goes over to supply the place of M. Gérard, as his Most Christian Majesty's minister to the Congress. He is a gentleman of a most amiable character here, has great connexions, and is a hearty friend to America.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, 8 July, 1779.

Dear Sir,

I received your favors of the 2d and 4th instant. I am sorry for the accidents, that have obliged your little squadron to return and refit, but I hope all may be for the best. Some days since, M. de Chaumont handed to me the substance of a letter in French, which contained heads of the instructions, that M. de Sartine wished me to give you. I had them translated, and put into the form of a letter to you, which I signed, and gave back to M. de Chaumont, who, I suppose, has sent it to you. I have no other orders to give; for, as the court is at the chief expense, I think they have the best right to direct.

I observe what you write about a change of the destination; but, when a thing has been once considered and determined on in council, they do not care to resume the consideration of it, having much business on hand, and there is not now time to obtain a reconsideration. It has been hinted to me, that the intention of ordering your cruise to finish at the Texel, is with a view of getting out that ship; but this should be kept a secret.

I can say nothing about Captain Landais' prize. I suppose the minister has an account of it, but I have heard nothing from him about it. If he reclaims it on account of his passport, we must then consider what is to be done. I approve of the careenage proposed for the *Alliance*, as a thing necessary. As she is said to be a remarkably swift sailer, I should hope you might by her means take some privateers, and a number of prisoners, so as to continue the cartel, and redeem all our poor countrymen. My best wishes ever attend you. I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

English and French Ministry.

Passy, 19 August, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have just now received your favor of the 17th. I wrote to you a day or two ago, and have little to add. You ask my opinion, what conduct the English will probably hold on this occasion,* and whether they will not rather propose a negotiation for a peace. I have but one rule to go by in judging of those people, which is, that whatever is prudent for them to do they will omit; and what is most imprudent to be done, they will do it. This, like other general rules, may sometimes have its exceptions; but I think it will hold good for the most part, at least while the present ministry continues, or, rather, while the present madman has the choice of ministers.

You desire to know whether I am satisfied with the ministers here? It is impossible for anybody to be more so. I see they exert themselves greatly in the common cause, and do every thing for us they can. We can wish for nothing more, unless our great want of money should make us wish for a subsidy, to enable us to act more vigorously in expelling the enemy from their remaining posts, and reducing Canada. But their own expenses are so great, that I cannot press such an addition to it. I hope, however, that we shall get some supplies of arms and ammunition, and perhaps, when they can be spared, some ships to aid in reducing New York and Rhode Island.

* Proposed descent of a French army on the coast of England, for which the French government were now preparing; but the plan was ultimately laid aside.

At present, I know of no good opportunity of writing to America. There are merchant ships continually going, but they are very uncertain conveyances. I long to hear of your safe arrival in England; but the winds are adverse, and we must have patience. With the sincerest esteem and respect, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Forwarding a Sword in the Name of Congress.

Passy, 24 August, 1779.

SIR,

The Congress, sensible of your merit towards the United States, but unable adequately to reward it, determined to present you with a sword, as a small mark of their grateful acknowledgment. They directed it to be ornamented with suitable devices. Some of the principal actions of the war, in which you distinguished yourself by your bravery and conduct, are therefore represented upon it. These, with a few emblematic figures, all admirably well executed, make its principal value. By the help of the exquisite artists France affords, I find it easy to express every thing but the sense we have of your worth and our obligations to you. For this, figures and even words are found insufficient. I therefore only add, that with the most perfect esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My grandson goes to Havre with the sword, and will have the honor of presenting it to you.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Acknowledging the Reception of the Sword.

Havre, 29 August, 1779.

SIR,

Whatever expectations might have been raised from the sense of past favors, the goodness of the United States for me has ever been such, that on every occasion it far surpasses any idea I could have conceived. A new proof of that flattering truth, I find in the noble present which Congress have been pleased to honor me with, and which is offered in such a manner by your Excellency, as will exceed any thing but the feelings of my unbounded gratitude.

In some of the devices I cannot help finding too honorable a reward for those slight services, which, in concert with my fellow soldiers, and under the godlike American hero's orders, I had the good luck to render. The sight of these actions, where I was a witness of American bravery and patriotic spirit, I shall ever enjoy with that pleasure, which becomes a heart glowing with love for the nation, and the most ardent zeal for their glory and happiness. Assurances of gratitude, which I beg leave to present to your Excellency, are much too inadequate to my feelings; and nothing but those sentiments may properly acknowledge your kindness towards me.

The polite manner in which Mr. Temple Franklin was pleased to deliver that inestimable sword, lays me under great obligations to him, and demands my particular thanks. With the most perfect respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

LAFAYETTE.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 26 September, 1779.

SIR,

I received yesterday evening the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me, together with the packet for M. De la Luzerne, which I shall take care to forward with my despatches. I could have wished it had been possible to write something positive to the Congress by this opportunity, on the subject of the supplies they have asked, because I apprehend great inconveniences may arise from their being left in a state of uncertainty on that account, not only as the hope or expectation of obtaining those supplies may prevent their taking other measures, if possible, to obtain them, but as the disappointment will give great advantage to their enemies, external and internal. Your Excellency will be so good as to excuse my making this observation, which is forced from me by my great anxiety on the occasion. With the greatest respect, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, 30 September, 1779.

SIR,

I have within these few days received a number of despatches from you, which have arrived by the *Mercury* and other vessels. Hearing this instant of an opportunity from Bordeaux, and that the courier sets out from Versailles at five this evening, I embrace it, just to let you know, that I have delivered the letters from Congress to the King, and have laid the invoices of supplies desired (with a translation) before the min-

isters; and, though I have not yet received a positive answer, I have good reason to believe I shall obtain most of them, if not all. But, as this demand will cost the court a vast sum, and their expenses in the war are prodigious, I beg I may not be put under the necessity, by occasional drafts on me, of asking for more money than is required to pay our bills for interest. I must protest those I have advice of from Martinique and New Orleans, (even if they were drawn by permission of Congress,) for want of money; and I wish the Committee of Commerce would caution their correspondents not to embarrass me with their bills.

I put into my pocket nothing of the allowance Congress has been pleased to make me. I shall pay it all in honoring their drafts and supporting their credit; but do not let me be burdened with supporting the credit of every one, who has claims on the board of commerce, or the navy. I shall write fully by the *Mercury*. I send you some of the latest newspapers, and have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO EDWARD BRIDGEN.

On a Copper Coinage for the United States.

Passy, 2 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of the 17th past, and the two samples of copper are since come to hand. The metal seems to be very good, and the price reasonable; but I have not yet received the orders necessary to justify my making the purchase proposed. There has indeed been an intention to strike copper coin, that may not only be useful as small change, but serve other purposes.

Instead of repeating continually upon every halfpenny the dull story that everybody knows, (and what it would have been no loss to mankind if nobody had ever known,) that George the Third is King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c. &c., to put on one side, some important proverb of Solomon, some pious moral, prudential or economical precept, the frequent inculcation of which, by seeing it every time one receives a piece of money, might make an impression upon the mind, especially of young persons, and tend to regulate the conduct; such as, on some, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;* on others, *Honesty is the best policy;* on others, *He that by the plough would thrive, himself must either hold or drive;* on others, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;* on others, *A penny saved is a penny got;* on others, *He that buys what he has no need of, will soon be forced to sell his necessaries;* on others, *Early to bed and early to rise, will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise;* and so on, to a great variety.

The other side it was proposed to fill with good designs, drawn and engraved by the best artists in France, of all the different species of barbarity with which the English have carried on the war in America, expressing every abominable circumstance of their cruelty and inhumanity, that figures can express, to make an impression on the minds of posterity as strong and durable as that on the copper. This resolution has been a long time forborne; but the late burning of defenceless towns in Connecticut, on the flimsy pretence that the people fired from behind their houses, when it is known to have been premeditated and ordered from England, will probably give the finishing provocation, and may occasion a vast demand for your metal.

I thank you for your kind wishes respecting my health. I return them most cordially fourfold into your own bosom. Adieu.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN JAY, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Beaumarchais's Accounts. — Neufville's proposed Loan. — Inactivity of the Combined Fleets. — Holland, England, and Portugal. — Prisoners. — Paul Jones's Cruise. — Complaints of French Officers. — Monument to General Montgomery. — Spain.

Passy, 4 October, 1779

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor to write to me of the of June last, enclosing acts of Congress respecting bills of exchange for two millions four hundred thousand livres tournois, drawn on me in favor of M. de Beaumarchais. The bills have not yet appeared, but I shall accept them when they do, relying on the care of Congress to enable me to pay them. As to the accounts of that gentleman, neither the Commissioners, when we were all together, nor myself since, have ever been able to obtain a sight of them, though repeatedly promised; and I begin to give over all expectation of them. Indeed, if I had them, I should not be able to do much with them, or to controvert any thing I might doubt in them, being unacquainted with the transactions and agreements on which they must be founded, and having small skill in accounts. Mr. Ross and Mr. Williams, pressing me to examine and settle theirs, I have been obliged to request indifferent persons, expert in such business, to do it for me, subject to the revision

of Congress; and I could wish that my time and attention were not taken up by any concerns in mercantile affairs, and thereby diverted from others more important.

The letters of Congress to the King were very graciously received. I have earnestly pressed the supplies desired, and the ministers (who are extremely well disposed towards us) are now actually studying the means of furnishing them. The assistance of Spain is hoped for. We expect to hear from thence in a few days. The quantity is great, and will cost a vast sum. I have this day accepted three of your drafts, part of the three hundred and sixty thousand livres, drawn for on the 9th of June; but, when I ask for money to pay them, I must mention, that, as they were drawn to purchase military stores, an abatement, equal to the value, may be made of the quantity demanded from hence; for I am really ashamed to be always worrying the ministers for more money. And, as to the private loans expected, I wrote in a former letter, that our public credit was not yet sufficiently established, and that the loan in Holland had not exceeded eighty thousand florins, to which there has since been no addition.

A Mr. Neufville came from thence to me last spring, proposing to procure great sums, if he might be employed for that purpose, and the business taken away from the house that had commenced it. His terms at first were very extravagant, such as that all the estates real and personal in the Thirteen Provinces should be mortgaged to him; that a fifth part of the capital sum borrowed should every year, for five years, be laid out in commodities, and sent to Holland, consigned to him, to remain in his hands till the term (ten years) stipulated for final payment was completed,

as a security for the punctuality of it, when he was to draw the usual commissions; that all vessels or merchandise coming from America to Europe should be consigned to him or his correspondents, &c. &c. As I rejected these with some indignation, he came down to the more reasonable one of doing the business as it was done by the other house, who, he said, could do no more, being destitute of the interest which he possessed.

I did not care abruptly to change a house, that had in other respects been very friendly and serviceable to us, and thereby throw a slur upon their credit, without a certainty of mending our affairs by it, and therefore told Mr. Neufville, that, if he could procure and show me a list of subscribers, amounting to the sum he mentioned, or near it, I would comply with his proposition. This he readily and confidently undertook to do. But, after three months, during which he acquainted me from time to time, that the favorable moment was not yet come, I received, instead of the subscription, a new set of propositions, among the terms of which were an additional *one per cent*, and a patent from Congress, appointing him and his sons "*Commissioners for Trade and Navigation, and Treasurers of the General Congress and of every private State of the Thirteen United States of North America, through the Seven United Provinces*," with other extravagancies; which I mention, that it may be understood why I have dropped a correspondence on this subject with a man, who seemed to me a vain promiser, extremely self-interested, and aiming chiefly to make an appearance without solidity, and who I understand intends applying directly to Congress, some of his friends censuring me as neglecting the public interest in not coming into his measures.

The truth is, I have no expectations from Holland, while interest received there from other nations is so high, and our credit there so low; while particular American States offer higher interest than the Congress, and even our offering to raise our interest tends to sink our credit. My sole dependence now is upon this court. I think reasonable assistance may be obtained here, but I wish I may not be obliged to fatigue it too much with my applications, lest it should grow tired of the connexion.

Mr. Ross has lately demanded of me near twenty thousand pounds sterling, due to him from the Committee of Commerce, but I have been obliged to refuse him, as well as an application made last week by Mr. Izard for more money, though he has already had two thousand five hundred guineas, and another from Mr. Arthur Lee, though he has had five hundred guineas since the news of his being out of this commission.* He writes me, that he will return to America forthwith, if I do not undertake to supply his expenses. As I see no likelihood of his being received at Madrid, I could not but approve his resolution.

We had reason to expect some great events from the action of the fleets this summer in the Channel; but they are all now in port, without having effected any thing. The junction was late; and the length of time the Brest fleet was at sea, equal to an East India voyage, partly on the hot Spanish coast, occasioned a sickness among the people, that made their return necessary; they had chased the English fleet, which refused combat. The sick men are recovering fast since they were landed; and the proposed descent on England does not yet seem to be quite given up, as the troops are not withdrawn from the ports.

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II. pp. 446, 262, 268, 272.

Holland has not yet granted the succours required by the English, nor even given an answer to the requisition presented by Sir Joseph Yorke. The aids will be refused; and, as the refusal must be disagreeable, it will be postponed from time to time. The expectations of assistance from Russia and Prussia seem also to have failed the English; and they are as much at a loss to find effective friends in Europe, as they have been in America.

Portugal seems to have a better disposition towards us than heretofore. About thirty of our people, taken and set ashore on one of her islands by the English, were maintained comfortably by the governor during their stay there, furnished with every necessary, and sent to Lisbon, where, on inquiry to whom payment was to be made for the expense they had occasioned, they were told, that no reimbursement was expected, that it was the Queen's bounty, who had a pleasure in showing hospitality to strangers in distress. I have presented thanks, by the Portuguese Ambassador here in behalf of Congress; and I am given to understand, that probably in a little time the ports of that nation will be open to us, as well as those of Spain. What relates to Spain, I suppose Mr. Lee informs you of.

The sword ordered by Congress for the Marquis de Lafayette being at length finished, I sent it down to him at Havre, where he was with the troops intended for the invasion. I wrote a letter with it, and received an answer, copies of which I enclose, together with a description of the sword, and drawings of the work upon it, which was executed by the best artists in Paris, and cost altogether two hundred guineas. The present has given him great pleasure, and some of the circumstances have been agreeable to the nation.

Our cartel goes on, a second cargo of American

prisoners, one hundred and nineteen in number, being arrived and exchanged. Our privateers have dismissed a great number at sea, taking their written paroles to be given up in exchange for so many of our people in their gaols. This is not yet quite agreed to on the other side; but some expectations are given me, that it may take place. Certainly, humanity would find its account in the practice of exchanging on parole; as all the horrors of imprisonment, with the loss of time and health, might be prevented by it.

We continue to insult the coasts of these *lords of the ocean* with our little cruisers. A small cutter, which was fitted out as a privateer at Dunkirk, called the *Black Prince*, has taken, ransomed, burnt, and destroyed above thirty sail of their vessels within these three months. The owners are about to give her a consort, called the *Black Princess*, for whom they ask a commission. The prisoners brought in serve to exchange our countrymen, which makes me more willing to encourage such armaments, though they occasion a good deal of trouble. Captain, now Commodore Jones, put to sea this summer with a little squadron, consisting of a ship of forty guns, the *Alliance*, another frigate of twenty, with some armed cutters; all under American colors, with Congress commissions. He has sent in several prizes, has greatly alarmed the coast of Ireland and Scotland, and we just now hear, that, going north about, he fell in with a number of ships from the Baltic, convoyed by a fifty-gun ship and a twenty-four-gun frigate, both of which he took, after an obstinate engagement, and forced several of the others ashore. This news is believed, but we wait the confirmation and the particulars.

The blank commissions remaining, of those sent to us here, are all signed by Mr. Hancock, which occa-

sions some difficulty. If Congress approves of my continuing to issue commissions, I wish to have a fresh supply, with the other necessary instructions, rules, bonds, &c., of which none are now left.

M. le Comte de Mallebois, esteemed one of the best generals in this country, and who loves our cause, has given me a memorial, containing a project for a corps here for your service, which I promised to lay before Congress, and accordingly enclose a copy. I know nothing of the sentiments of Congress on the subject of introducing foreign troops among us, and therefore could give no expectation that the plan would be adopted. It will, however, be a pleasure to him to know, that his good will to serve them has been acceptable to the Congress.

A Major Deborre, who has been in America, and some other officers who have quitted our service in disgust, endeavour to give an idea, that our nation does not love the French. I take all occasions to place in view the regard shown by Congress to good French officers, as a proof that the slight these gentlemen complain of is particular to themselves, and probably the effect of their own misbehaviour. I wish for the future, when any of this sort of people leave our armies to come home, some little sketch of their conduct or character may be sent me, with the real causes of their resignation or departure, that I may be the more able to justify our country.

Here are returned in the last cartel a number of French sailors, who had engaged with Captain Conyngham, were taken in coming home in one of his prizes, and have been near two years in English prisons. They demand their wages and share of prize money. I send their claim, as taken before the officers of the classes at Dunkirk. I know nothing of the

agreement, which they allege was made with them. Mr. Hodge perhaps can settle the affair, so that they may have justice done them. This sort of things gives me a great deal of trouble. Several of those men have made personal applications to me, and I must hear all their stories, though I cannot redress them. I enclose also the claim of two gunners, upon a prize made by the *Boston*, Captain Tucker. I am persuaded that Congress wish to see justice done to the meanest stranger that has served them. It is justice that establishes a nation.

The Spanish ambassador here delivered me several complaints against our cruisers. I imagine, that all the injuries complained of are not justly chargeable to us, some of the smaller English cruisers having pillaged Spanish vessels under American colors, of which we have proof upon oath; and also, that no such American privateers, as are said to have committed these robberies after coming out of Nantes, have ever been known there, or in any other part of France, or even have existed. But, if any of the complaints are well founded, I have assured the ambassador that the guilty will be punished, and reparation made.

The Swedish ambassador also complains of the taking of a ship of his nation by Captain Landais, the master of which lays his damages at sixty thousand livres. I understand it was his own fault that he was stopped, as he did not show his papers. Perhaps this, if proved, may enable us to avoid the damages.

Since writing the above, I have received the following further particulars of the action between Commodore Jones and the English men-of-war. The forty-four-gun ship is new, having been but six months off the stocks; she is called the *Serapis;* the other of twenty guns is the *Countess of Scarborough.* He had

before taken a number of valuable prizes, particularly a rich ship bound to Quebec, which we suppose he may have sent to America. The English, from mistaken intelligence, imagining he had a body of troops with him to make descents, have had all their northern coasts alarmed, and have been put to very expensive movements of troops, &c.

The extravagant luxury of our country, in the midst of all its distresses, is to me amazing. When the difficulties are so great to find remittances to pay for the arms and ammunition necessary for our defence, I am astonished and vexed to find upon inquiry, that much the greatest part of the Congress interest bills come to pay for tea, and a great part of the remainder is ordered to be laid out in gewgaws and superfluities. It makes me grudge the trouble of examining, and entering, and accepting them, which indeed takes a great deal of time.

I yesterday learned from M. de Monthieu, that every thing necessary for equipping two frigates, of thirty-six guns each, such as sailcloth, cordage, anchors, &c. &c., which we sent to the Congress from hence two years since, remains stored in the warehouses of his correspondent, Mr. Carrabas, at Cape François, having never been called for. Probably by the miscarriage of letters, the Navy Board never heard of those goods being there. I shall, nevertheless, leave the application I have lately made for materials for a frigate of thirty-six guns to take its course. But I send you herewith copies of two invoices of the cargo of the *Thérèse*, one of which is what was sent by us, the other by M. de Beaumarchais, to the end that inquiry may be made after the whole.

On this occasion give me leave to remark, that, of all the vast quantities of goods we have sent you by many

different vessels since my being in France, we never were happy enough to receive the least scrip of acknowledgment that they had ever come to hand, except from Mr. Langdon, of a cargo arrived at Portsmouth, and I think of one more. This is doubtless owing to the interruption our correspondence has met with, and not altogether to neglect. But, as such advices of receipt may be made in short letters, it would be well to send more copies. The following is a matter of less importance. It is two years, I believe, since I sent the monument of General Montgomery. I have heard that the vessel arrived in North Carolina, but nothing more. I should be glad to know of its coming to hand, and whether it is approved. Here it was admired for the goodness and beauty of the marble, and the elegant simplicity of the design. The sculptor has had an engraving made of it, of which I enclose a copy. It was contrived to be affixed to the wall within some church, or in the great room where the Congress met. Directions for putting it up went with it. All the parts were well packed in strong cases.* With the greatest respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *October 28th.* I kept the packet in hopes of sending a more explicit account of what might be expected in regard to the supplies. The express, which was daily expected from Spain, when I began this letter, arrived but a few days since. I am now informed, that court is understood to be in treaty with the Congress in America, to furnish a sum of hard money there, and, on that account, excuses itself from sharing in the expense of furnishing these supplies.

* This monument is erected in the front of St. Paul's Church, in New York.

This has a little deranged the measures intended to be taken here, and I am now told, that the whole quantity of goods demanded can hardly be furnished, but that, as soon as the court returns from Marly, the ministers will consult, and do the best they can for us. The arms, I hear, are in hand at Charleville. I am unwilling to keep the packet any longer, lest she should arrive on our coasts too far in the winter, and be blown off. I therefore send away the despatches; but, if I have the result of the council in time to reach her by post, I will send it in a separate letter. The hearty good will of the ministry may be depended on; but it must be remembered, that their present expenses are enormous.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Newington Green, 14 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Will you be so good as to get the enclosed letter conveyed to Mr. Arthur Lee, if he is near you, and it can be done easily. If not, be so good as to burn it. Being obliged for particular reasons to avoid politics, it is a short acknowledgment of the favor he did me by a letter I received from him at the beginning of last summer, and contains nothing of much importance.

I received the greatest pleasure from the note, which you sent me by Mr. Jones and Mr. Paradise. They were much gratified by your kind notice of them. Dr. Priestley is well, and much engaged in prosecuting his experiments on air. Dr. Ingenhousz, by whose hands this is conveyed, has lately been warmly employed in the same pursuit. He will tell you what great success he has met with. The Society of honest Whigs, which you used to honor with your com-

pany, are soon to renew their meetings for the winter, and you will undoubtedly be one of the first subjects of our conversation. I spent in August some time with an amiable family near Winchester.* The house in the garden, that you used to frequent, often brought you to our remembrance. You can scarcely imagine with what respect and affection you are talked of there.

I have heard, with particular concern, of the death of Dr. Winthrop. To this we are all destined, but the virtuous will be happy in better regions. The clouds gather frightfully over this country. I am waiting for the issue with anxiety, but at the same time with much complacency in the reflection, that at this most important period I have endeavoured to act the part of a faithful and good citizen. Accept, my dear friend, these lines as a testimony of my affectionate remembrance. May Heaven preserve you, and grant you the best enjoyments. With great regard, I am ever yours,

RICHARD PRICE.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Capture of the Serapis. — Misconduct of Captain Landais. — Prizes sent to Bergen.

Passy, 15 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I received the account of your cruise and engagement with the *Serapis*, which you did me the honor to send me from the Texel. I have since received your favor of the 8th, from Amsterdam. For some days after the arrival of your express, scarce any thing was talked of at Paris and Versailles, but your cool conduct and persevering bravery during that terrible conflict. You may believe, that the impression on my

* Probably the family of the Bishop of St. Asaph.

mind was not less strong than on that of others; but I do not choose to say in a letter to yourself all I think on such an occasion.

The ministry are much dissatisfied with Captain Landais, and M. de Sartine has signified to me in writing, that it is expected that I should send for him to Paris, and call him to account for his conduct, particularly for deferring so long his coming to your assistance; by which means, it is supposed, the States lost some of their valuable citizens, and the King lost many of his subjects, volunteers in your ship, together with the ship itself.

I have, accordingly, written to him this day, acquainting him that he is charged with disobedience of orders in the cruise, and neglect of his duty in the engagement; that, a court-martial being at this time inconvenient, if not impracticable, I would give him an earlier opportunity of offering what he has to say in his justification, and for that purpose direct him to render himself immediately here, bringing with him such papers or testimonies, as he may think useful in his defence. I know not whether he will obey my orders, nor what the ministry would do with him, if he comes; but I suspect that they may, by some of their concise operations, save the trouble of a court-martial. It will, however, be well for you to furnish me with what you may judge proper to support the charges against him, that I may be able to give a just and clear account to Congress. In the mean time it will be necessary, if he should refuse to come, that you should put him under an arrest; and in that case, as well as if he comes, that you should either appoint some person to the command, or take it upon yourself; for I know of no person to recommend to you as fit for that station.

I am uneasy about your prisoners; I wish they were

safe in France.* You will then have completed the glorious work of giving liberty to all the Americans that have so long languished for it in the British prisons; for there are not so many there, as you have now taken.

I have the pleasure to inform you, that the two prizes sent to Norway are safely arrived at Bergen With the highest esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I am sorry for your misunderstanding with M. de Chaumont, who has a great regard for you.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Paul Jones's Cruise. — Lee and Deane. — Prizes taken by Jones's Squadron, and sent to Norway.

Passy, 17 October, 1779.

SIR,

The foregoing is a copy of my last. I have now before me your several favors therein mentioned, viz. of June 13th, July 9th and 16th, and August 6th. I received the Journals of Congress from January 1st to June 12th, which you took care to send me; but the first and second volumes which you mention, are not yet come to hand. I hear they are at Madrid. I know not how they came there, nor well how to get them from thence. Perhaps you can easier send me another set.

As I hear of the arrival of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, by whom I wrote a long letter to your Committee, I presume you have received it, and that it is not necessary to send more copies. By this opportunity I write largely to the President. You ask, "Will no one, under a commission from the United States," &c. Enclosed I send you a copy of the instructions

* The number of prisoners was five hundred and four.

I gave to Commodore Jones, when it was intended to send with him some transports and troops to make descents in England. Had not the scheme been altered by a general one of a grand invasion, I know he would have endeavoured to put some considerable towns to a high ransom, or have burnt them. He sailed without the troops, but he nevertheless would have attempted Leith, and went into the Firth of Edinburgh with that intention, but a sudden hard gale of wind forced him out again. The late provocations by the burning of Fairfield and other towns, added to the preceding, have at length demolished all my moderation; and, were such another expedition to be concerted, I think so much of that disposition would not appear in the instructions. But I see so many inconveniences in mixing the two nations together, that I cannot encourage any further proposal of the kind. This has ended better than I expected; and yet a mortal difference has arisen between Captains Jones and Landais, that makes me very uneasy about the consequences. I send you the journal of the cruise.

I am glad to understand, that Congress will appoint some person here to audit our accounts. Mine will give but little trouble, and I wish much to have them settled. And, for the future, I hope I shall have none to settle but what relate to my expenses.

The quarrel you mention, between Mr. Deane and Mr. Lee, I have never meddled with, and have no intention to take any part in it whatever. I had and have still a very good opinion of Mr. Deane, for his zeal and activity in the service of his country; I also thought him a man of integrity. But if he has embezzled public money, or traded with it on his private account, or employed it in stockjobbing, all which I understand he is charged with, I give him up. As

yet, I think him innocent. But he and his accusers are able to plead their own causes, and time will show what we ought to think of them.

I send you with this, a piece written by a learned friend of mine on the taxation of free States, which I imagine may give you some pleasure. Also a late royal edict, for abolishing the remains of slavery in this kingdom. Who would have thought, a few years since, that we should live to see a king of France giving freedom to slaves, while a king of England is endeavouring to make slaves of freemen.

There is much talk all over Europe of an approaching peace by the mediation of Russia and Holland. I have no information of it to be depended on, and believe we ought to lay our account on another campaign, for which I hope you will receive in time the supplies demanded. Nothing is wanting on my part to forward them; and I have the satisfaction to assure you, that I do not find the regard of this court for the Congress and its servants in any respect diminished. We have just heard from Norway, that two of the most valuable prizes taken by the *Alliance*, Captain Landais, in the squadron of Commodore Jones, are safe arrived at Bergen, viz. the ship from London to Quebec, laden with naval stores, and that from Liverpool to New York and Jamaica. They were letters of marque, of twenty-two guns and eighty-four men each; I wish we may get them safe to America. The squadron itself is got into Holland, with the two prize men-of-war, where they are all refitting. Great damage has been done to the English coal trade, and four hundred prisoners have been taken, which will more than redeem the rest of our people from their captivity in England, if we can get them safe from Holland to France; but I suppose the English will endeavour to

intercept us, and recover their ships, if possible. With great esteem for yourself and the Committee, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

His Situation in France.

Passy, 25 October, 1779.

—— I received your kind letter of February 14th, the contents of which gave me a kind of melancholy satisfaction. The greater ease you will now enjoy makes some compensation in my mind for the uncomfortable circumstance that brought it about. I hope you will have no more affliction of that kind, and that, after so long and stormy a day, your evening may be serene and pleasant.

The account you have had of the vogue I am in here has some truth in it. Perhaps few strangers in France have had the good fortune to be so universally popular; but the story you allude to, mentioning "mechanic rust," is totally without foundation. But one is not to expect being always in fashion. I hope, however, to preserve, while I stay, the regard you mention of the French ladies; for their society and conversation, when I have time to enjoy them, are extremely agreeable.

The enemy have been very near you indeed. When only at the distance of a mile, you must have been much alarmed. We have given them a little taste of this disturbance upon their own coasts this summer; and, though we have burnt none of their towns, we have occasioned a good deal of terror and bustle in many of them, as they imagined our Commodore Jones had four thousand troops with him for descents.

I am glad to learn that my dear sister continued in good health, and good spirits, and that she had learnt not to be afraid of her friend, fresh air. With the tenderest affection, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

American Privateers. — Commodore Jones. — Rumor of Peace. — Importation of Superfluities.

Passy, 27 October, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

It is a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you. The intelligence you were used to favor me with was often useful to our affairs. I hope I have not lost your friendship, together with your correspondence. Our excellent Mr. Winthrop, I see, is gone. He was one of those old friends, for the sake of whose society I wished to return and spend the small remnant of my days in New England. A few more such deaths will make me a stranger in my own country. The loss of friends is the tax a man pays for living long himself. I find it a heavy one.

You will see by the newspapers that we have given some disturbance to the British coasts this year. One little privateer out of Dunkirk, the *Black Prince*, with a Congress commission, and a few Americans mixed with the Irish and English smugglers, went round their Islands and took thirty-seven prizes in less than three months. The little squadron of Commodore Jones, under the same commission and colors, has alarmed those coasts exceedingly, occasioned a good deal of internal expense, done great damage to their trade, and taken two frigates, with four hundred prisoners. He is now with his principal prizes in Holland, where

he is pretty well received, but must quit that neutral country as soon as his damages are repaired. The English watch with a superior force his coming out, but we hope he will manage so as to escape their vigilance. Few actions at sea have demonstrated such steady, cool, determined bravery, as that of Jones in taking the *Serapis*.

There has been much rumor this summer throughout Europe, of an approaching peace, through the mediation of Russia and Holland; but it is understood to arise from the invention of stockjobbers and others interested in propagating such opinions. England seems not to be yet sufficiently humbled, to acknowledge the independence of the American States, or to treat with them on that footing; and our friends will not make a peace on any other. So we shall probably see another campaign.

By the invoices I have seen and heard of, sent hither with Congress interest bills of exchange to purchase the goods, it should seem that there is not so great a want of necessaries as of superfluities among our people. It is difficult to conceive that your distresses can be great, when one sees that much the greatest part of that money is lavished in modes, and gewgaws, and tea! Is it impossible for us to become wiser, when by simple economy, and avoiding unnecessary expenses, we might more than defray the charge of the war. We export solid provision of all kinds, which is necessary for the sustenance of man, and we import fashions, luxuries, and trifles. Such trade may enrich the traders, but never the country.

The good will of all Europe to our cause as being the cause of liberty, which is the cause of mankind, still continues, as does the universal wish to see the English pride humiliated, and their power curtailed.

Those circumstances are encouraging, and give hopes of a happy issue. Which may God grant, and that you, my friend, may live long a blessing to your country. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

On his Edition of Dr. Franklin's Writings.

Passy, 9 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have received several kind letters from you, which I have not regularly answered. They gave me however great pleasure, as they acquainted me with your welfare, and that of your family and other friends; and I hope you will continue writing to me as often as you can do it conveniently.

I thank you much for the great care and pains you have taken in regulating and correcting the edition of those papers. Your friendship for me appears in almost every page; and if the preservation of any of them should prove of use to the public, it is to you that the public will owe the obligation. In looking them over, I have noted some faults of impression that hurt the sense, and some other little matters, which you will find all in a sheet under the title of *Errata.* You can best judge whether it may be worth while to add any of them to the errata already printed, or whether it may not be as well to reserve the whole for correction in another edition, if such should ever be. Enclosed I send a more perfect copy of the *Chapter.**

* Alluding to the celebrated *Parable against Persecution.* See Vol. II. p. 118. Mr. Vaughan had reprinted it from the copy first published by Lord Kames, which was imperfect.

If I should ever recover the pieces that were in the hands of my son, and those I left among my papers in America, I think there may be enough to make three more such volumes, of which a great part would be more interesting.

As to the *time* of publishing, of which you ask my opinion, I am not furnished with any reasons, or ideas of reasons, on which to form any opinion. Naturally I should suppose the bookseller to be from experience the best judge, and I should be for leaving it to him.

I did not write the pamphlet you mention. I know nothing of it. I suppose it is the same, concerning which Dr. Priestley formerly asked me the same question. That for which he took it was entitled, *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, with these lines in the titlepage.*

> "Whatever is, is right. But purblind man
> Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest links;
> His eyes not carrying to that equal beam,
> That poises all above." DRYDEN.
>
> *London. Printed MDCCXXV.*

I return the manuscripts you were so obliging as to send me; I am concerned at your having no other copies, I hope these will get safe to your hands. I do not remember the Duke de Chaulnes showing me the letter you mention. I have received Dr. Crawford's book, but not your abstract, which I wait for as you desire.

I send you also M. Dupont's *Table Economique*, which I think an excellent thing, as it contains in a clear method all the principles of that new sect, called here *les Economistes*.

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* No copy of this tract is now known to be in existence. It was written and printed by Franklin when he first visited England in his youth. He gives an account of it in his autobiography.

Poor Henly's dying in that manner is inconceivable to me. Is any reason given to account for it, besides insanity?

Remember me affectionately to all your good family, and believe me, with great esteem, my dear friend, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN BAPTIST BECCARIA.

Passy, 19 November, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Having some time since heard of your illness with great concern, it gave me infinite pleasure to learn this day from M. Chantel, who did me the honor of a visit, that you were so far recovered as to be able to make little excursions on horseback. I pray God that your convalescence may be quick and perfect, and your health be again firmly established. Science would lose too much in losing one so zealous and active in its cause, and so capable of accelerating its progress and augmenting its dominions.

I find myself here immersed in affairs, which absorb my attention, and prevent my pursuing those studies in which I always found the highest satisfaction; and I am now grown so old, as hardly to hope for a return of that leisure and tranquillity so necessary for philosophical disquisitions. I have, however, not long since thrown a few thoughts on paper relative to the Aurora Borealis, which I would send you, but that I suppose you may have seen them in the *Journal* of the Abbé Rozier. If not I will make out a copy, and send it to you; perhaps with some corrections.

Every thing of your writing is always very welcome to me; if, therefore, you have lately published any

new experiments or observations in physics, I shall be happy to see them, when you have an opportunity of sending them to me. With the highest esteem, respect, and affection, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO R. BERNSTORFF, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENMARK.

Remonstrating against the Seizure of American Prizes at Bergen in Norway.

Passy, 22 December, 1779.

Sir,

I have received a letter from M. de Chezaulx, consul of France at Bergen in Norway, acquainting me, that two ships, viz. the *Betsey* and the *Union*, prizes taken from the English on their coasts by Captain Landais, commander of the *Alliance* frigate, appertaining to the United States of North America, which prizes having met with bad weather at sea, that had damaged their rigging and had occasioned leaks, and being weakly manned had taken shelter in the supposed neutral port of Bergen, in order to repair their damages, procure an additional number of sailors, and the necessary refreshments; that they were in the said port enjoying, as they conceived, the common rights of hospitality, established and practised by civilized nations, under the care of the above said consul, when, on the 28th of October last, the said ships, with their cargoes and papers, were suddenly seized by officers of his Majesty, the King of Denmark, to whom the said port belongs; the American officers and seamen turned out of their possession, and the whole delivered to the English consul.

M. de Chezaulx has also sent me the following as

a translation of his Majesty's order, by which the above proceedings are said to be authorized, viz. "The English minister having insisted on the restitution of two vessels, which had been taken by the American privateer called the *Alliance*, commanded by Captain Landais, and which were brought into Bergen, viz. the *Betsey* of Liverpool, and the *Union* of London, his Majesty has granted this demand on this account, because he has not as yet acknowledged the independence of the colonies associated against England, and because that these vessels for this reason cannot be considered as good and lawful prizes. Therefore, the said two ships shall be immediately liberated, and allowed to depart with their cargoes." By a subsequent letter from the same consul, I am informed, that a third prize belonging to the United States, viz. the *Charming Polly*, which arrived at Bergen after the others, has also been seized and delivered up in the same manner; and that all the people of the three vessels, after being thus stripped of their property (for every one had an interest in the prizes), were turned on shore to shift for themselves, without money, in a strange place, no provision being made for their subsistence, or for sending them back to their country.

Permit me, Sir, to observe on this occasion, that the United States of America have no war but with the English; they have never done any injury to other nations, particularly none to the Danish nation; on the contrary, they are in some degree its benefactors, as they have opened a trade of which the English made a monopoly, and of which the Danes may now have their share, and, by dividing the British Empire, have made it less dangerous to its neighbours. They conceived, that every nation whom they had not offended was by the rights of humanity their friend; they con

fided in the hospitality of Denmark, and thought themselves and their property safe when under the roof of his Danish Majesty. But they find themselves stripped of that property, and the same given up to their enemies, on this principle only, that no acknowledgment had yet been formally made by Denmark of the independence of the United States; which is to say, that there is no obligation of justice towards any nation with whom a treaty, promising the same, has not been previously made. This was indeed the doctrine of ancient barbarians, a doctrine long since exploded, and which it would not be for the honor of the present age to revive; and it is hoped that Denmark will not, by supporting and persisting in this decision, obtained of his Majesty apparently by surprise, be the first modern nation that shall attempt to revive it.*

The United States, oppressed by, and at war with, one of the most powerful nations of Europe, may well be supposed incapable in their present infant state of exacting justice from other nations not disposed to grant it; but it is in human nature, that injuries as well as benefits received in times of weakness and distress, national as well as personal, make deep and lasting impressions; and those ministers are wise, who look into futurity and quench the first sparks of misunderstanding between two nations, which, neglected,

* "The ancients," says Vattel, "did not conceive themselves bound under any obligation towards a people with whom they were not connected by a treaty of friendship. At length the voice of nature was heard by civilized nations; they acknowledged all mankind as brothers." An injustice of the same kind, done a century or two since by some English in the East Indies, Grotius tells us, "was not without its partisans, who maintained, that by the ancient laws of England, no one was liable to punishment in that kingdom for outrages committed against foreigners, when no treaty of alliance had been contracted with them." But this principle he condemns in the strongest terms. — *History of the Troubles in the Netherlands,* Book xvi.

may in time grow into a flame, all the consequences whereof no human prudence can foresee, which may produce much mischief to both, and cannot possibly produce any good to either. I beg leave, through your Excellency, to submit these considerations to the wisdom and justice of his Danish Majesty, whom I infinitely respect, and who, I hope, will reconsider and repeal the orders above recited; and that, if the prizes, which I hereby reclaim in behalf of the United States of America, are not actually gone to England, they may be stopped and re-delivered to M. de Chezaulx, the consul of France at Bergen, in whose care they before were, with liberty to depart for America when the season shall permit. But, if they should be already gone to England, I must then claim from his Majesty's equity the value of the said prizes, which is estimated at fifty thousand pounds sterling, but which may be regulated by the best information that can by any means be obtained. With the greatest respect, I am, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Military Supplies for the American Army.

Paris, 9 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

According to an appointment I had requested from M. de Montbarrey,* I had this morning a conversation with that minister, wherein I earnestly urged the necessity of sending from the royal magazines to America fifteen thousand stands of arms, and a large quantity of powder. I cannot say my endeavours, though exerted to the best of my power, have met with an immediate success. But, from this first inter-

* Minister of War.

view, I flatter myself we may, in some measure, carry the desired point.

I was at first told by the minister, that you had a bargain ready made for arms, but did not much dwell on the argument. He kindly desired the affair might be in time duly considered, but, upon my assuring him, that no time was to be lost, and that the arms should go with other articles you were about to send, he, in obliging terms for us, promised he would in a few days give me a positive answer. I am to have, towards the middle of the week, a conference with M. de Maurepas,* and a second one with M. de Vergennes, on the same subject, upon which I have this morning written to this last minister, so that I shall before long be able to tell you how my little negotiation has ended. With the most perfect regard and tender affection, I have the honor to be, &c.

LAFAYETTE.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN

Paris, 10 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

From a ministerial letter, which I have just received from Versailles, I begin to hope that my little negotiation will take a good turn, and, as I made it a point to succeed in this affair, no exertions will be untried for the purpose. I should have done myself the honor of waiting on you this morning, if I had not been seized with a violent cold, which I the more carefully attend to, as I want to be on Wednesday in the situation of making a tolerable figure at Versailles, where I am to entertain M. de Maurepas and the

* The prime minister of the French cabinet.

other ministers with a final conversation on the affair of arms and powder, that I have so much at heart. From their good dispositions towards America, and the sincere desire they have of helping our fellow citizens, the sons of liberty, I flatter myself that the money of Congress will be employed in any thing but buying the powder and the stands of arms, that are wanted in the continent.

How happy I shall ever feel to be the instrument of any thing good for them, I need not mention to my good friend, Dr. Franklin; and, for reasons no less obvious, I will not dwell upon the assurance of the private sentiments of affection and regard, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

LAFAYETTE.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 27 January, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 10th instant. I shall be glad to learn how the taking of the Dutch ships has been accommodated. We have yet no news of the *Alliance*, but suppose she is cruising. We are more in pain for the *Confederacy*, which sailed the 28th of October from the Capes of Delaware. There is some hope that she went to Charleston to take in Mr. Laurens; for some passengers arrived in France, who left Philadelphia several weeks after her sailing, say, that it was a general opinion she would call there before she departed for Europe. If this was not the case, we fear she must be lost, and the loss will be a very severe one.

I send you enclosed a translation of a letter, that I think I sent you the original of before. Perhaps it may serve our Leyden friend.

I am sorry you have any difference with the ambassador, and wish you to accommodate it as soon as possible. Depend upon it, that no one ever knew from me that you had spoken or written against any person. There is one concerning whom I think you sometimes receive erroneous information. In one particular, I know you were misinformed, that of his selling us arms at an enormous profit; the truth is we never bought any of him. I am &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

America will not treat without her Allies. — England not disposed to Peace. — Conduct of the British Army in America.

Passy, 2 February, 1780.

DEAR FRIEND,

It is some time since I procured the discharge of your Captain Stephenson. He did not call here in his way home. I hope he arrived safely, and had a happy meeting with his friends and family.

I have long postponed answering your letter of the 29th of June. A principal point in it, on which you seemed to desire my opinion, was, the conduct you thought America ought to hold, in case her allies should, from motives of ambition or resentment of former injuries, desire her to continue the war, beyond what should be reasonable and consistent with her particular interests. As often as I took up your letter in order to answer it, this suggestion displeased me, and I laid it down again. I saw no occasion for discussing such a question at present, nor any good end it could serve to discuss it before the case should happen; and I

saw inconveniences in discussing it. I wish, therefore, you had not mentioned it. For the rest, I am as much for peace as ever I was, and as heartily desirous of seeing the war ended, as I was to prevent its beginning; of which your ministers know I gave a strong proof before I left England, when, in order to an accommodation, I offered at my own risk, without orders for so doing, and without knowing whether I should be owned in doing it, to pay the whole damage of destroying the tea at Boston, provided the acts made against that province were repealed. This offer was refused. I still think it would have been wise to have accepted it. If the Congress have therefore intrusted to others, rather than to me, the negotiations for peace, when such shall be set on foot, as has been reported, it is perhaps because they may have heard of a very singular opinion of mine, that there hardly ever existed such a thing as a bad peace, or a good war, and that I might therefore easily be induced to make improper concessions. But at the same time they and you may be assured, that I should think the destruction of our whole country, and the extirpation of our whole people, preferable to the infamy of abandoning our allies.

As neither you nor I are at present authorized to treat of peace, it seems to little purpose to make or consider propositions relating to it. I have had so many such put into my hands, that I am tired of them. I will, however, give your proposal of a ten years' truce this answer, that, though I think a solid peace made at once a much better thing, yet, if the truce is practicable and the peace not, I should be for agreeing to it. At least I see at present no sufficient reasons for refusing it, provided our allies approve of it. But this is merely a private opinion of mine, which perhaps may be changed by reasons, that at present

do not offer themselves. This, however, I am clear in, that withdrawing your troops will be best for you, if you wish a cordial reconciliation, and that the truce should produce a peace. To show that it was not done by compulsion, being required as a condition of the truce, they might be withdrawn beforehand, for various good reasons. But all this is idle chat, as I am persuaded, that there is no disposition for peace on your side, and that this war will yet last many years. I know nothing, and believe nothing, of any terms offered to Sir Henry Clinton.

The prisoners taken in the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough* being all treated for in Holland, and exchanged there, I hope Mr. Brown's son is now safe at home with his father. It grieved me, that the exchange there, which you may remember I immediately proposed, was so long delayed. Much human misery might have been prevented by a prompt compliance; and so might a great deal by the execution of parole promises taken at sea; but, since I see no regard is paid to them in England, I must give orders to our armed ships that cruise in Europe to secure their prisoners as well as they can, and lodge them in French or Spanish prisons. I have written something on this affair to Mr. Hodgson,* and sent to him the second passport for a cartel to Morlaix, supposing you to be out of town. The number of prisoners we now have in France is not easily ascertained. I suppose it exceeds one hundred; yet you may be assured, that the number which may be brought over by the two cartels shall be fully exchanged, by adding to those taken by us as many as will make up the complement out

* William Hodgson was an agent in London for supplying the wants of American prisoners in England, and transacting business in relation to exchanges.

of those taken by the French, with whom we have an account since the exchange in Holland of those we carried in there. I wish therefore you would, as was proposed, clear your prisons of the Americans, who have been so long confined there. The cartels, that may arrive at Morlaix, will not be detained.

You may have heard, that accounts upon oath have been taken in America, by order of Congress, of the British barbarities committed there. It is expected of me to make a schoolbook of them, and to have thirty-five prints designed here by good artists, and engraved, each expressing one or more of the different horrid facts, to be inserted in the book, in order to impress the minds of children and posterity with a deep sense of your bloody and insatiable malice and wickedness. Every kindness I hear of, done by an Englishman to an American prisoner, makes me resolve not to proceed in the work, hoping a reconciliation may yet take place. But every fresh instance of your devilism weakens that resolution, and makes me abominate the thought of a reunion with such a people. You, my friend, have often persuaded me, and I believed it, that the war was not theirs, nor approved by them. But their suffering it so long to continue, and the wretched rulers to remain who carry it on, makes me think you have too good an opinion of them. Adieu, my dear friend, &c

B. Franklin.

TO RICHARD PRICE.

Passy, 6 February, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I received but very lately your kind favor of October 14th, Dr. Ingenhousz, who brought it, having stayed

long in Holland. I sent that enclosed directly to Mr. Lee. It gave me great pleasure to understand that you continue well. Your writings, after all the abuse you and they have met with, begin to make serious impressions on those who at first rejected the counsels you gave; and they will acquire new weight every day, and be in high esteem when the cavils against them are dead and forgotten.

Please to present my affectionate respects to that honest, sensible, and intelligent Society,* who did me so long the honor of admitting me to share in their instructive conversations. I never think of the hours I so happily spent in that company, without regretting that they are never to be repeated; for I see no prospect of an end to this unhappy war in my time. Dr. Priestley, you tell me, continues his experiments with success. We make daily great improvements in *natural*, there is one I wish to see in *moral* philosophy; the discovery of a plan, that would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cutting one another's throats. When will human reason be sufficiently improved to see the advantage of this? When will men be convinced, that even successful wars at length become misfortunes to those, who unjustly commenced them, and who triumphed blindly in their success, not seeing all its consequences. Your great comfort and mine in this war is, that we honestly and faithfully did every thing in our power to prevent it. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

* Supposed to allude to a Club at the London Coffee-house.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

True Science and its Progress. — Inconveniences attend all Situations in Life.

Passy, 8 February, 1780

DEAR SIR,

Your kind letter of September 27th came to hand but very lately, the bearer having stayed long in Holland. I always rejoice to hear of your being still employed in experimental researches into nature, and of the success you meet with. The rapid progress *true* science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon. It is impossible to imagine the height to which may be carried, in a thousand years, the power of man over matter. We may perhaps learn to deprive large masses of their gravity, and give them absolute levity, for the sake of easy transport. Agriculture may diminish its labor and double its produce; all diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, not excepting even that of old age, and our lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian standard. O that moral science were in as fair a way of improvement, that men would cease to be wolves to one another, and that human beings would at length learn what they now improperly call humanity!

I am glad my little paper on the *Aurora Borealis* pleased. If it should occasion further inquiry, and so produce a better hypothesis, it will not be wholly useless. I am ever, with the greatest and most sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Enclosed in the foregoing Letter; being an Answer to a separate Paper received from Dr. Priestley.

I have considered the situation of that person very attentively. I think that, with a little help from the *Moral Algebra*,* he might form a better judgment than any other person can form for him. But, since my opinion seems to be desired, I give it for continuing to the end of the term, under all the present disagreeable circumstances. The connexion will then die a natural death. No reason will be expected to be given for the separation, and of course no offence taken at reasons given; the friendship may still subsist, and in some other way be useful. The time diminishes daily, and is usefully employed. All human situations have their inconveniences; we *feel* those that we find in the present, and we neither *feel* nor *see* those that exist in another. Hence we make frequent and troublesome changes without amendment, and often for the worse.

In my youth, I was passenger in a little sloop, descending the river Delaware. There being no wind, we were obliged, when the ebb was spent, to cast anchor, and wait for the next. The heat of the sun on the vessel was excessive, the company strangers to me, and not very agreeable. Near the river side I saw what I took to be a pleasant green meadow, in the middle of which was a large shady tree, where it struck my fancy I could sit and read, (having a book in my pocket,) and pass the time agreeably till the tide turned. I therefore prevailed with the captain to put me ashore. Being landed, I found the greatest part of my meadow was really a marsh, in

* See letter to Dr. Priestley, dated September 19th, 1772. p. 20.

crossing which, to come at my tree, I was up to my knees in mire; and I had not placed myself under its shade five minutes, before the mosquitoes in swarms found me out, attacked my legs, hands, and face, and made my reading and my rest impossible; so that I returned to the beach, and called for the boat to come and take me on board again, where I was obliged to bear the heat I had strove to quit, and also the laugh of the company. Similar cases in the affairs of life have since frequently fallen under my observation.

I have had thoughts of a college for him in America. I know no one who might be more useful to the public in the instruction of youth. But there are possible unpleasantnesses in that situation; it cannot be obtained but by a too hazardous voyage at this time for a family; and the time for experiments would be all otherwise engaged.*

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, 19 February, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours from Carone of the 16th past, and from L'Orient of the 13th instant. I rejoice that you are so safely arrived in France, *malgré* all the pains taken to intercept you.

As to the refitting of your ship at the expense of

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* The advice contained in this paper related to Dr. Priestley himself, who had engaged to live with Lord Shelburne, as his librarian, at a salary of about three hundred pounds per annum, for a certain number of years; but, before the term had expired, he became dissatisfied with his situation, and requested counsel from Dr. Franklin on the subject.— W. T. F.

this court, I must acquaint you, that there is not the least probability of obtaining it, and therefore I cannot ask it. I hear too much already of the extraordinary expense you made in Holland, to think of proposing an addition to it, especially as you seem to impute the damage she has sustained more to Captain Landais' negligence, than to accidents of the cruise. The whole expense will, therefore, fall upon me, and I am ill provided to bear it, having so many unexpected calls upon me from all quarters. I therefore beg you will have mercy on me, put me to as little charge as possible, and take nothing that you can possibly do without.

As to sheathing with copper, it is totally out of the question. I am not authorized to do it, if I had money; and I have not money, if I had orders. The purchase of the *Serapis* is in the same predicament. I believe the sending of cordage and canvass from Amsterdam has already been forbidden; if not, I shall forbid it. I approve of your applying to Messrs. Gourdale & Moylan for what repairs you want, having an exceedingly good opinion of those gentlemen; but, let me repeat, for God's sake be sparing, unless you mean to make me a bankrupt, or have your drafts dishonored for want of money in my hands to pay them.

We are likely to obtain fifteen thousand stands of good arms from the government. They are much wanted in America. M. de Lafayette has just now proposed, that you should take them as ballast. You know best if this is practicable.

Mr. Ross requests to be permitted to take his passage with you. As he has been a servant of the States, in making their purchases in Europe, it seems to me, that it would be wrong to refuse him, if you can accommodate him. There is also a particular friend of mine, Mr. Samuel Wharton of Philadelphia, who

desires to go with you. These gentlemen will doubtless lay in their own stores, and pay as customary for their accommodations, and I am persuaded you will find them agreeable company. Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard also propose to take their passages in your ship, whom I hope you can likewise accommodate. Pray write me immediately your sentiments on these particulars; and let me know, at the same time, when you think you can be ready, that I may forward my despatches.

I am glad to hear, that your indisposition is wearing off. I hope your health will soon be reëstablished. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Arms and Clothing for the American Troops.

Paris, 29 February, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

In consequence of the assent, that your Excellency was pleased to honor my request with, I shall beg your obliging help positively to fix my ideas on some affairs relating to our army, in which I had the happiness of acting as one of your agents at the court of Versailles.

From the ministers of war, and the minister of foreign affairs, I get the most positive assurance, that our fifteen thousand stands of arms, with the same number of accoutrements, will be soon delivered for the use of the American army, and safely conveyed. The other demands I have made in that department have not been as yet positively answered to, but I shall get a return of such articles as may be obtained from M. de Montbarrey; and that return I shall have

the honor of sending to your Excellency, as soon as it comes into my hands.

According to your request, I have made it a point to carry with me about four thousand complete suits, and have got from the minister of the navy such an order as will direct the captain of the frigate appointed for my passage, not only to take on board the clothing, that will be brought to Rochelle, but even, if necessary for making room, to disembark a part of his provisions.

In consequence of positive ministerial assurances, I make no doubt but that you will have the safest convoy for the remaining six thousand suits of clothes, that are making at Nantes. I have heard of a hundred and twenty bales of cloth for public service, that are sent by you on board of the *Alliance*, but do not know exactly how much clothing they will afford for the army. Notwithstanding your despatches to Congress, which I hope I shall be intrusted with, I confess it would be very agreeable for me to know exactly the quantity and the kind of the several articles, that you are preparing for us; so that I may give to General Washington a positive basis, which his Excellency can depend upon.

I had this morning the honor of imparting to you the ideas I proposed to Count de Vergennes, for providing new clothing for the army, that might arrive before the winter; and, as to the conversation on money affairs, in my private capacity I may be much less moderate than the ministers of the United States. I beg your pardon, my good friend, for the trouble I am giving you, but your friendship encourages me to do it; and I know such a note, as I beg leave to require, will be extremely agreeable when I arrive at

head-quarters.* With the most sincere attachment and perfect regard, I have the honor to be &c.

LAFAYETTE.

TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Seizure of Prizes in Norway. — Commodore Jones and Captain Landais. — Necessity of appointing a Consul. — Exchange of Prisoners. — Prospects of England.

Passy, 4 March, 1780.

SIR,

M. Gérard, under whose care I understand the despatches from Congress to me were forwarded, is not yet arrived here, and I have not received them. I cannot, therefore, at present answer any thing that may be contained in them. He is, however, expected next week, and I may afterwards have time to write further by the *Alliance*. Mr. Adams is come, but did not bring duplicates of those despatches. I have, in obedience to the order of Congress, which he produced to me, furnished him with one thousand louis-d'ors. I have also given a credit to Mr. Jay upon the correspondent of our banker at Madrid for an equal sum. I have not yet heard of his arrival there. His letter to me was from Cadiz, of the 28th of January.

In my last I gave some account of the success of our little squadron under Commodore Jones. Three

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* The Marquis de Lafayette was on the eve of departing for America, having been successful, not only in procuring from the French government a large quantity of military supplies for the American army, but also in persuading the ministry to send auxiliary troops to the United States. These followed soon afterwards under the command of Count de Rochambeau. See the history of these transactions in *Washington's Writings*, Vol. VII. pp. 477–506.

of their prizes sent into Bergen in Norway, were, at the instance of the British minister, seized by order of the court of Denmark, and delivered up to him. I have, with the approbation of the ministry here, drawn up and sent to that court a memorial reclaiming those prizes. It went through the hands of the French minister residing there, who has delivered it; but I have yet no answer. I understand from the French consul at Bergen, that the prizes remain still in that port, and it is said there is some hope that the order may be reversed; but this is doubtful, and I suppose the Congress will immediately consider this important affair, and give me such instructions upon it as they may judge proper. With this, I send a copy of the memorial.

During the cruise a mortal quarrel took place between the Commodore and Captain Landais. On their arrival in Holland, M. de Sartine, Minister of the Marine, proposed to me the sending for Landais, in order to inquire into his conduct. I doubted the propriety of my meddling in the affair; but Captain Landais' friends conceiving it a measure that might be serviceable to him, and pressing it, I complied, and he came accordingly to Paris. I send the minutes of the inquiry for the consideration of Congress. I have not presumed to condemn or acquit him, doubting as well my own judgment as my authority. He proposes to demand a court-martial in America. In his absence from the ship, the Commodore took the command of her, and on quitting the Texel made a cruise through the channel to Spain, and has since returned to L'Orient, where the ship is now refitting in order to return to America. Captain Landais has not applied to me to be replaced in her, and I imagine has no thought of that kind, having before on several occasions ex-

pressed to me and others his dissatisfaction with his officers, and his inclination on that account to quit her. Captain Jones will therefore carry her home, unless he should be prevailed with to enter another service, which, however, I think is not likely, though he has gained immense reputation all over Europe for his bravery.

As vessels of war under my care create me a vast deal of business, of a kind too, that I am unexperienced in, and by my distance from the coast is very difficult to be well executed, I must repeat my earnest request, that some person of skill in such affairs may be appointed in the character of consul, to take charge of them. I imagine that much would by that means be saved in the expense of their various refittings and supplies, which to me appears enormous.

Agreeably to the order of Congress, I have employed one of the best artists here in cutting the dies for the medal intended for M. de Fleury. The price of such work is beyond my expectation, being a thousand livres for each die. I shall try if it is not possible to have the others done cheaper.

Our exchange of prisoners has been for some time past at a stand, the English admiralty refusing, after long consideration, to give us any men in return for those who had been dismissed by our armed vessels on parole, and the actual prisoners we had being all exchanged. When the squadron of Commodore Jones arrived in the Texel with five hundred English prisoners, I proposed exchanging there; but this was declined, in expectation, as I heard from England, of retaking them in their way to France. The stay of our ships in Holland, through the favor of the States, being prolonged, and the squadron stationed to intercept us being tired of cruising for us, the British ministry consented at length to a cartel with France, and brought

Frenchmen to Holland to exchange for those prisoners instead of Americans. These proceedings have occasioned our poor people to be kept longer in confinement; but the Minister of the Marine, having given orders that I should have as many English, another cartel charged with Americans is now daily expected, and I hope in a few months to see them all at liberty. This for their sakes, and also to save expense; for their long and hard imprisonment induces many to hazard attempts of escaping; and those who get away through London and Holland, and come to Paris in their way to some seaport in France, cost one with another, I believe, near twenty pounds sterling a head.

The delays in the exchange have I think been lengthened by the Admiralty, partly with the view of breaking the patience of our people and inducing them to enter the English service. They have spared no pains for this purpose, and have prevailed with some. The number of these has not indeed been great, and several of them lost their lives in the blowing up of the *Quebec*. I am also lately informed from London, that the flags of truce with prisoners from Boston, one of which is seized as British property, will obtain no Americans in exchange; the returned English being told, that they had no authority or right to make such agreements with rebels, &c. This is not the only instance in which it appears, that a few late successes have given that nation another *hour of insolence*. And yet their affairs upon the whole wear a very unpromising aspect. They have not yet been able to find any allies in Europe. Holland grows daily less and less disposed to comply with their requisitions; Ireland is not satisfied, but is making new demands; Scotland, and the Protestants in England are uneasy, and the associations of counties in England, with com-

mittees of correspondence to make reforms in the government, all taken together, give a good deal of apprehension at present, even to their mad ministers; while their debt, on the point of amounting to the amazing sum of two hundred millions, hangs as a millstone upon the neck of their credit, and must ere long sink it beyond redemption.

The disposition of this court continues as favorable as ever, though it cannot comply with all our demands. The supplies required, in the invoice sent me by the Committee, appeared too great and numerous to be immediately furnished. Three millions of livres were, however, granted me, with which, after deducting what will be necessary to pay the interest bills, and other late drafts of Congress, I could not venture in ordering more than ten thousand suits of clothes. With these, we shall have fifteen thousand arms and accoutrements. A good deal of the cloth goes over in the *Alliance*, purchased by Mr. Ross, which, it is computed, may make seven or eight thousand suits more. But although we have not obtained that invoice of goods, this court being at immense expense in the preparations for the next campaign, I have reason to believe that a part of those preparations will be employed in essential assistance to the United States, and I hope effectual, though at present I cannot be more particular.

I have sent to Mr. Johnson the vote of Congress relative to the settlement of the accounts. He has expressed his readiness to enter on the service. Mr. Deane is soon expected here, whose presence is very necessary, and I hope with his help they may be gone through without much difficulty. I could have wished it had suited Mr. Lee to have been here at the same time.

The Marquis de Lafayette, who, during his residence in France, has been extremely zealous in supporting our cause on all occasions, returns again to fight for it. He is infinitely esteemed and beloved here, and I am persuaded will do every thing in his power to merit a continuance of the same affection from America. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

The Marquis de Lafayette. — Invitation to visit Europe.

Passy, 5 March, 1780.

SIR,

I have received but lately the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me in recommendation of the Marquis de Lafayette. His modesty detained it long in his own hands. We became acquainted, however, from the time of his arrival at Paris; and his zeal for the honor of our country, his activity in our affairs here, and his firm attachment to our cause and to you, impressed me with the same regard and esteem for him that your Excellency's letter would have done, had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another campaign or two, and afford us a little leisure, I should be happy to see your Excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my age and strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous kingdoms. You would, on this side of the sea, enjoy the great reputation you have acquired, pure and free from those little shades that the jealousy and envy of a man's countrymen and contemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what

posterity will say of Washington. For a thousand leagues have nearly the same effect with a thousand years. The feeble voice of those grovelling passions cannot extend so far either in time or distance. At present I enjoy that pleasure for you; as I frequently hear the old generals of this martial country, who study the maps of America, and mark upon them all your operations, speak with sincere approbation and great applause of your conduct; and join in giving you the character of one of the greatest captains of the age.

I must soon quit this scene, but you may live to see our country flourish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the war is over; like a field of young Indian corn, which long fair weather and sunshine had enfeebled and discolored, and which in that weak state, by a thunder gust of violent wind, hail, and rain, seemed to be threatened with absolute destruction; yet the storm being past, it recovers fresh verdure, shoots up with double vigor, and delights the eye, not of its owner only, but of every observing traveller.

The best wishes that can be formed for your health, honor, and happiness, ever attend you from yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.*

M. de Malesherbes. — Spain. — Advantage of great States.

Passy, 5 March, 1780.

SIR,

I received with great pleasure the letter you did me the honor of writing to me from Boston. I rejoiced

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* Successor to M. Gérard, as minister from the French court to the United States

to hear of your safe arrival, and that the reception you met with in my country had been agreeable to you. I hope its air will suit you, and that, while you reside in it, you will enjoy constant health and happiness.

Your good brother does me sometimes the honor of calling on me, and we converse in English, which he speaks very intelligibly. I suppose that by this time you do the same. M. de Malesherbes did me lately the same honor. That great man seems to have no wish of returning into public employment, but amuses himself with planting, and is desirous of obtaining all those trees of North America, that have not yet been introduced into France. Your sending him a box of the seeds would, I am persuaded, much oblige him. They may be obtained of my young friend Bartram, living near Philadelphia.

You will have heard that Spain has lately met with a little misfortune at sea, but the bravery with which her ships fought a vastly superior force has gained her great honor. We are anxious here for further news from that coast, which is daily expected. Great preparations are making here for the ensuing campaign, and we flatter ourselves that it will be more active and successful in Europe than the last.

One of the advantages of great states is, that the calamity occasioned by a foreign war falls only on a very small part of the community, who happen from their situation and particular circumstances to be exposed to it. Thus as it is always fair weather in our parlours, it is at Paris always peace. The people pursue their respective occupations; the playhouses, the opera, and other public diversions, are as regularly and fully attended, as in times of profoundest tranquillity, and the same small concerns divide us into parties.

Within these few weeks we are for or against Jeannot, a new actor. This man's performance, and the marriage of the Duke de Richelieu, fill up much more of our present conversation, than any thing that relates to the war. A demonstration this of the public felicity.

My grandson joins with me in best wishes for your health and prosperity. He is much flattered by your kind remembrance of him. We desire also that M. de Marbois * would accept our assurances of esteem. I have the honor to be with the greatest respect, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

Dr. Ingenhousz.— Newly invented Telescope.

Passy, 6 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your political *Squibs;* they are well made. I am glad to find you have such plenty of good powder.

You propose that *Kill-pig*, the butcher, should operate upon himself. You will find some thoughts on that subject in a little piece called *A Merry Song about Murder*, in a London newspaper I send herewith.

The greatest discovery made in Europe for some time past is that of Dr. Ingenhousz's relating to the great use of the leaves of trees in producing wholesome air. I would send you his book, if I had it. A new instrument is lately invented here,† a kind of telescope, which by means of Iceland crystal occa-

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* Secretary of the French Legation in the United States.

† By the Abbé Rochon, of the French Academy of Sciences.

sions the double appearance of an object, and, the two appearances being farther distant from each other in proportion to the distance of the object from the eye, by moving an index on a graduated line till the two appearances coincide, you find on the line the real distance of the object. I am not enough master of this instrument to describe it accurately, having seen it but once; but it is very ingeniously contrived.

Remember me respectfully to your mother and sisters, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM R. BERNSTORFF, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENMARK, TO B. FRANKLIN.

On the Seizure of the American Prizes in Norway.

Translation.

Copenhagen, 8 March, 1780.

SIR,

Were you a person less known and respected, I should have been quite at a loss on the subject of the letter, which I have had the honor of receiving from you, which did not come to hand till the 31st of January. I should have considered it as a measure calculated to place us under a new embarrassment as painful as the first; but there is no fear nor risk with such a sage as you are, Sir, generally respected by that universe which you have enlightened, and known for that prevailing love for truth which characterizes the good man and the true philosopher. These are the titles, which will transmit your name to the remotest posterity, and in which I am particularly interested at the time, when the situation of affairs imposes on me the necessity of divesting myself of every pub-

lic character, in writing to you, and only to aspire at appearing to you what I truly am, the earnest friend of peace, truth, and merit.

This mode of thinking not only decides my personal sentiments with respect to you, but also those I have respecting the unfortunate affair, which you have thought fit to mention to me, and which, from its commencement, has given me the utmost pain. You will readily agree with me, Sir, in granting, that there are perplexing situations in which it is impossible to avoid displeasing one party. You are too equitable not to enter into ours. There would be no consolation in such cases, nor would the persons who have been led into them ever be forgiven, were it not that opportunities sometimes present themselves of being heard, and preventing in future such essential embarrassments.

The Baron de Blome will speak to you in confidence, and with the utmost freedom on this subject; and, if my wishes can be accomplished, I shall be recompensed for all my pains, and there will only remain the agreeable recollection of having had the satisfaction of assuring you, from under my hand, of that perfect esteem with which I have the honor of being, Sir, &c. R. BERNSTORFF.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Affairs in England.

Passy, 16 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The Marquis de Lafayette, our firm and constant friend, returning to America, I have written a long letter by him to the President, of which a copy goes by this ship. M. Gérard is since arrived, and I have re-

ceived the despatches you mentioned to me, but no letter in answer to mine, a very long one, by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, nor any acknowledgment that it came to hand.

By the many newspapers and pamphlets I send, you will see the present state of European affairs in general. Ireland continues to insist on complete liberty, and will probably obtain it. The meetings of counties in England, and the committees of correspondence they appoint, alarm a good deal the ministry, especially since it has been proposed to elect out of each committee a few persons to assemble in London, which, if carried into execution, will form a kind of Congress, that will have more of the confidence and support of the people than the old Parliament. If the nation is not too corrupt, as I rather think it is, some considerable reformation of internal abuses may be expected from this. With regard to us, the only advantage to be reasonably expected from it is a peace, the general bent of the nation being for it.

The success of Admiral Rodney's fleet against our allies has a little elated our enemies for the present, and probably they will not now think of proposing it. If the approaching campaign, for which great preparations are making here, should end disadvantageously to them, they will be more treatable; for their debts and taxes are daily becoming more burdensome, while their commerce, the source of their wealth, diminishes; and, though they have flattered themselves with obtaining assistance from Russia and other powers, it does not appear they are likely to succeed; on the contrary, they are in danger of losing the neutrality of Holland.

Their conduct with regard to the exchange of prisoners has been very unjust. After long suspense and affected delays for the purpose of wearing out our

poor people, they have finally refused to deliver us a man in exchange for those set at liberty by our cruisers on parole. A letter, which I enclose, from Captain Mitchell, will show the treatment of the late flags of truce from Boston. There is no gaining any thing from these barbarians by advances of civility or humanity.

Enclosed I send for Congress the justification of this court against the accusation published in the late English memorials. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Introducing Thomas Hutchins.

Passy, 16 March, 1780.

SIR,

The bearer of this, Captain Hutchins, a native of New Jersey, but many years in the English service, has lately escaped from England, where he suffered considerably for his attachment to the American cause. He is esteemed a good officer and an excellent engineer, and is desirous of being serviceable to his country. I enclose his memorial to me, a great part of which is consistent with my knowledge; and I beg leave to recommend him to the favorable notice of Congress, when any affair occurs in which his talents may be useful. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

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* MEMORIAL OF THOMAS HUTCHINS.

"To his Excellency, Benjamin Franklin, minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America, at the court of France;

"The memorial of Thomas Hutchins, a native of New Jersey, in America, and late a captain and engineer in the British King's service, humbly sheweth,

"THAT your Excellency's memorialist was, in the month of August last, taken into custody by virtue of a warrant from Sir John Fielding,

TO THOMAS BOND.

Passy, 16 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of September the 22d, and I thank you for the pleasing account you give me of the health and welfare of my old friends, Hugh Roberts, Luke Morris, Philip Syng, Samuel Rhoads, &c., with the same of yourself and family. Shake the old ones by the hand for me, and give the young ones my blessing. For my own part, I do not find that I grow any older. Being arrived at seventy, and considering that by travelling further in the same road I should probably be led to the grave, I stopped short, turned about, and walked back again; which having done these four years, you may now call me sixty-six. Advise those old friends of ours to follow my example; keep up your spirits, and that will keep up

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of the city of London, in which your memorialist was charged with high treason, for having conveyed information to, and corresponded with, the friends of the United States of America in France. That your memorialist was committed to and kept in Clerkenwell prison, upwards of seven weeks, loaded with irons, put among felons, and treated with every kind of severity and insult, and forbidden to see or write to his friends.

"That, after several long examinations at the Board of Trade, the British ministers thought proper to discharge him from prison; and, being reduced to great distress by his pay both as captain and engineer being stopped, and being also refused payment of an account which the British government owed him (to the amount of eight hundred and sixty-nine pounds, nineteen shillings sterling), he was obliged to take lodgings in a garret, within the verge of the court. Your memorialist was offered two thousand guineas for his captain's commission; but, although he had frequently petitioned to sell it from the beginning of the war between the United States and Great Britain, he was as often refused; and, about three weeks before he was committed to prison, he was offered a majority in one of the new regiments then raising, which he would not accept, as he would not bear arms against his countrymen. Therefore, on the 11th of this month, (February,) finding himself treated with contempt by the British officers, and despairing of obtaining liberty

your bodies; you will no more stoop under the weight of age, than if you had swallowed a handspike.

I am glad the Philosophical Society made that compliment to M. Gérard. I wish they would do the same to M. Feutry, a worthy gentleman here; and to Dr. Ingenhousz, who has made some great discoveries lately respecting the leaves of trees in improving air for the use of animals. He will send you his book. He is physician to the Empress Queen. I have not yet seen your piece on inoculation. Remember me respectfully and affectionately to Mrs. Bond, your children, and all friends.* I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I have bought some valuable books, which I intend to present to the Society; but shall not send them till safer times.

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to sell his commission, he sent his resignation to Lord Amherst, both as captain and engineer, and in a private manner withdrew from Great Britain and came into France entirely destitute of money; choosing rather to abandon his commission (though the whole of his fortune) and incur a loss of two thousand nine hundred and sixty-nine pounds, nineteen shillings sterling, (exclusive of his appointment as engineer), than continue in a service altogether irksome and painful to him. Your memorialist begs leave further to represent, that he has served with reputation as a British officer more than twenty-two years, (eighteen whereof he was constantly employed as an engineer,) and that he is most anxiously solicitous of entering into the army of the United States. For these considerations, your memorialist humbly hopes that your Excellency will be pleased to recommend his request, sufferings, and losses to the honorable Congress of the United States, and your memorialist as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.

"THOMAS HUTCHINS."

On Mr. Hutchins's return to the United States, he was appointed by Congress geographer to the southern army. He died at Pittsburgh, April 28th, 1789, having rendered much and valuable service to his country by his personal enterprise, and by publications on the topography and geography of several parts of the United States, in preparing which he relied chiefly on his own observation.

* Dr Bond, to whom this letter was written, was an eminent physician of Philadelphia.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Alliance with France.

Passy, 16 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind favor by Captain Chavagnes, which I communicated to the minister of marine, who was much pleased with the character you give of the Captain. I have also yours of November 12th, by your grandson, who appears a very promising lad, in whom I think you will have much satisfaction. He is in a boarding school just by me, and was well last Sunday, when I had the pleasure of his company to dinner with Mr. Adams's sons, and some other young Americans. He will soon acquire the language; and, if God spares his life, may make a very serviceable man to his country.

It gives me infinite satisfaction to find, that, with you, the wisest and best among our people are so hearty in endeavouring to strengthen the alliance. We certainly owe much to this nation; and we shall obtain much more, if the same prudent conduct towards them continues, for they really and strongly wish our prosperity, and will promote it by every means in their power. But we should at the same time do as much as possible for ourselves, and not ride (as we say) a free horse to death. There are some Americans returning hence, with whom our people should be upon their guard, as carrying with them a spirit of enmity to this country. Not being liked here themselves, they dislike the people; for the same reason, indeed, they ought to dislike all that know them. With the sincerest respect and esteem, I am ever my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO CYRUS GRIFFIN.

Passy, 16 March, 1780.

SIR,

I have just received the letter you have done me the honor to write to me, and shall immediately deliver the packet it recommends to my care. I will take the first opportunity of mentioning to M. Gérard what you hint, relative to our not entertaining strangers so frequently and liberally, as is the custom in France. But he has travelled in Europe, and knows that modes of nations differ. The French are convivial, live much at one another's tables, and are glad to feast travellers. In Italy and Spain, a stranger, however recommended, rarely dines at the house of any gentleman, but lives at his inn. The Americans hold a medium. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, 18 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your letter relating to the bullets of the engineer in Denmark, and shall write thither accordingly. I have also just received yours of the 13th. Mr. Ross writes to me, that he finds a difficulty in passing the goods to you from L'Isle Noirmoutier. I do, therefore, now desire you, if practicable, to call at or off that island, in order to take them on board, their speedy and safe arrival in America being of the greatest consequence to the army. I have sent my despatches by Mr. Wharton, who set off yesterday morning. When they arrive, and you have got the cloth

on board, I know of nothing to retard your proceeding directly to such port in North America, as you shall judge most likely to be reached with safety. If in other respects equal, Philadelphia is to be preferred.

I wish the prize money due to your people could be paid, before they go. I have spoken often about it. As to the prizes sent in to Norway, you know they were delivered back to the English by the court of Denmark. I have reclaimed them by a strong memorial, but have yet received no answer; and it is doubted whether we shall recover any thing, unless by letters of marque and reprisal from the Congress, against the subjects of that kingdom, which, perhaps, in the present circumstances, it may not be thought proper soon to grant. The ships of war, that you took, are, I hear, to be valued, the King intending to purchase them; and the muster-roll of the *Bon Homme Richard* is wanting, in order to regulate the proportions to each ship. These things may take time. I have considered, that the people of the *Bon Homme* may want some little supplies for the voyage, and, therefore, if these proportions should not be regulated and paid before you sail, and you find it necessary, you may draw on me as far as twenty-four thousand livres to advance to them, for which they are to be accountable; but do not exceed that sum. I do this to prevent, as much as in me lies, the bad effects of any uneasiness among them; for I suppose that regularly all payments to seamen should be made at home.

A grand convoy, I understand, is to sail from Brest about the end of this month, or beginning of the next. It is of great importance to the United States, that not only the *Alliance*, but the merchantmen that may sail under her convoy, should safely arrive there. If it will be convenient and practicable for you to join that

convoy, and sail with it till off the coast, I wish it may be done. But I leave it to your discretion and judgment. I have no farther instructions to give, but, committing you to the protection of Providence, I wish you a prosperous voyage, and a happy sight of your friends in America; being with great esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Introducing the Chevalier de Chastellux.

Passy, 19 March, 1780.

Sir,

I beg leave to introduce to your Excellency's acquaintance and civilities the Chevalier de Chastellux; major-general in the French troops, now about to embark for America, whom I have long known and esteemed highly in his several characters of a soldier, a gentleman, and a man of letters. His excellent book on *Public Happiness* shows him the friend to mankind, and as such entitles him, wherever he goes, to their respect and good offices. He is particularly a friend to our cause, and I am sure your Excellency will have great pleasure in his conversation.* With great esteem and respect,

B. Franklin.

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* The Chevalier de Chastellux came to the United States with Count de Rochambeau's army. He travelled much in various parts of the country, and, after he returned to France, published an account of his travels, in a work entitled *Voyages dans l'Amérique Septentrionale*. It was well received both in Europe and America, and was translated into English and German. After his return to France the title of Marquis was conferred on him.

TO JOSEPH REED.

Mr. Pulteney. — Errors corrected. — Arthur Lee.

Passy, 19 March, 1780.

Sir,

I have just received the pamphlet you did me the honor to send me by M. Gérard, and have read it with pleasure. Not only as the clear state of facts it does you honor, but as it proves the falsehood of a man, who also showed no regard to truth in what he said of me, "*that I approved of the propositions he carried over.*" * The truth is this. His brother, Mr. Pulteney, came here with those propositions; and after stipulating, that, if I did not approve of them, I should not speak of them to any person, he communicated them to me. I told him frankly, on his desiring to know my sentiments, that I DID NOT *approve of them, and that I was sure they* WOULD NOT *be accepted in America.* "But," I said, "there are two other Commissioners here; I will, if you please, show your propositions to them, and you will hear their opinions. I will also show them to the ministry here, without whose knowledge and concurrence we can take no step in such affairs." "No," said he, "as you do not approve of them, it can answer no purpose to show them to anybody else; the reasons that weigh with you will also weigh with them; therefore I now pray, that no mention may be made of my having been here, or my business." To this I agreed, and therefore nothing could be more astonishing to me, than to see, in an

* Alluding to a statement made by Governor Johnstone, one of the British Commissioners for treating with Congress. See REMEMBRANCER, Vol. VII. pp. 8–18; also above, p. 230.

American newspaper, that direct lie, in a letter from Mr. Johnstone, joined with two other falsehoods relating to the time of the treaty, and to the opinion of Spain!

In proof of the above, I enclose a certificate of a friend of Mr. Pulteney's, the only person present at our interview; and I do it the rather at this time, because I am informed, that another calumniator (the same who formerly in his private letters to particular members accused you, with Messrs. Jay, Duane, Langdon, and Harrison, of betraying the secrets of Congress in a correspondence with the ministry) has made this transaction with Mr. Pulteney an article of accusation against me, as having approved the same propositions. He proposes, I understand, to settle in your government. I caution you to beware of him; for, in sowing suspicions and jealousies, in creating misunderstandings and quarrels among friends, in malice, subtilty, and indefatigable industry, he has I think no equal.*

* The person here alluded to was Arthur Lee. This severe censure was not without just grounds. We have heretofore seen (above, pp. 59, 257) evidences of Mr. Lee's hostility to Dr. Franklin. There are others, which, considering their nature and tendency, justice requires should not be withheld in this work. Some of them are contained in the following extract from the "North American Review."

"It seems to us, that there is another and much deeper cause of the settled enmity of Mr. Lee to Dr. Franklin, which he never pretended to conceal in conversation, or in writing to his friends, after he had been a few months in Paris. It is well known, that all his interest, and that of his friends in Congress, were used to procure Dr. Franklin's recall from France, with the view of securing Mr. Lee's appointment in his stead. His letters were filled with censures of Franklin's conduct, boldly affirming his unfitness for such a station, and at all events recommending, that, if it was impossible to effect his recall, he should be sent to an interior government, where he could do neither harm nor good. A few paragraphs from Mr. Lee's letters will set this subject in a clearer light. To Samuel Adams he writes, on the 4th of October, 1777; 'I have within this year been at the several courts of Spain, Vienna, and Berlin, and I find this of France is *the great wheel, that*

I am glad to see that you continue to preside in our new State, as it shows that your public conduct is approved by the people. You have had a difficult time, which required abundance of prudence, and you have been equal to the occasion. The disputes about the Constitution seem to have subsided. It is much admired here, and all over Europe, and will draw over many families of fortune to settle under it, as soon as there is a peace. The defects, that may on seven

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moves them all. Here therefore the most activity is requisite, and if it should ever be a question in Congress about my destination, *I should be much obliged to you for remembering, that I should prefer being at the court of France.*'—*Life of Arthur Lee*, Vol. II. p. 113. Again, on the same day he writes to his brother, Richard Henry Lee, then in Congress. 'My idea of adapting characters and places is this; *Dr. Franklin to Vienna, as the first, most respectable, and quiet.* Mr. Deane to Holland; and the Alderman, [William Lee,] to Berlin, as the commercial department; Mr. Izard where he is; Mr. Jennings at Madrid, his reserve and circumspection being excellently well adapted to that court. France remains the centre of political activity, and *here, therefore, I should choose to be employed.*' p. 115. Again, to Richard Henry Lee. 'Things go on worse and worse every day among ourselves, and our situation is more painful. I see in every department neglect, dissipation, and private schemes. Being in trust here, I am responsible for what I cannot prevent; those very men will probably be the instruments of having me called to an account one day for their misdeeds. There is but *one way* of redressing this, and remedying the public evil; that is, the plan I before sent you, of appointing the Doctor, *honoris causâ*, to Vienna; Mr. Deane to Holland; Mr. Jennings to Madrid; *and leaving me here.* In that case I should have it in my power to call those to an account, through whose hands I know the public money has passed, and which will either never be accounted for, or misaccounted for by the contrivance of those, who are to share in the public plunder.' p. 127. Here truly is a most persuasive argument for Congress to make Mr. Lee minister to France. What a frightful picture is here drawn of the mismanagement, disorders, and distracted condition of the American affairs at that court, and what deplorable consequences must ensue, unless that '*one way*' is resorted to, of sending Dr. Franklin to the capital of Austria, and setting Mr. Lee to turn the '*great wheel*' at Paris; by the magical movements of which, under his control, an infallible remedy will be applied, and a radical reform suddenly effected.

"In another letter to Samuel Adams, the same alluring prospect is

years' trial be found in it, can be amended, when the time comes for considering them. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

Certificate referred to above.

DEAR SIR,

I send you adjoined the certificate you desire, and am perfectly convinced, from conversations I have since

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again held out, on the easy condition only of the same arrangement. 'If Mr. Lloyd is appointed agent, *Dr. Franklin sent to Vienna*, Mr. Deane to Holland, and *I am left here*, we shall all act in concert; and not only have a full inquiry made into the expenditure of the public money, but establish that order, decency, and regularity, which are lately banished from the public business at present, so as to involve us in continual confusion and expense.' p. 137. Here we have the same modesty in the proposal, and the same temptation to comply with it." — *North American Review*, Vol. XXX. p. 505.

Mr. Lee wrote as follows to Mr. Lovell, then in Congress. "There is nothing of which I am more persuaded, than that Duane [a member of Congress from New York] is a secret, treacherous, and dangerous enemy to the United States. If Congress are satisfied, that, while from the feebleness of our marine the enemy's vessels of every description are plundering our commerce and our coast, one of our best frigates, the *Alliance*, should be kept upon a cruising job of Chaumont and Dr. Franklin, I shall be much surprised. I am sure that the latter would never have ventured to do so criminal an act, were he not resolved never to return to his country to give an account of his conduct, which, without some extraordinary conjuncture, or a total violation of justice, could not escape the severest condemnation." — *Paris, November 5th*, 1779.

He criminated others, as well as Dr. Franklin. Relative to the transactions of Congress in the affair of Mr. Deane, after that commissioner returned from France, he wrote; "There is, you may depend upon it, some deep design against our independence at the bottom Many of the faction are, I know, actuated by the *desire of getting or retaining the public plunder;* but besides this, Duane, Jay, Morris, and others, *who were originally against our independence, have it certainly in view to bring us back to our former denomination.* Besides the invincible desire such men have of seeing their system triumphant, you know what offers of emolument and honors have been thrown out, as a reward for those, who will effect this so much desired end for the King and his ministers. The same men who have been tempted by avarice to

had with Mr. Pulteney, that nobody was authorized to hold the language, which has been imputed to him on that subject; and, as I have a high opinion of his candor and worth, I know it must be painful to him to be brought into question in matters of fact with persons he esteems. I could wish that this matter may receive no further publicity, than what is necessary for your justification. I am, &c.

W. ALEXANDER.

Paris, 19 March, 1780.

I do hereby certify whom it may concern, that I was with Mr. Pulteney and Dr. Franklin at Paris, when in a conversation between them, on the subject of certain propositions for a reconciliation with America, offered by Mr. Pulteney, Dr. Franklin said, he did not approve of them, nor did he think they would be approved in America, but that he would communicate them to his colleagues and the French ministry. This Mr. Pulteney opposed, saying, that it would answer

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plunder the public, *have avarice, vanity, and ambition, to tempt them to sell the public.*" — *Paris, May 28th*, 1779.

Again, he wrote to J. J. Pringle; "So effectually have the seeds, sown by the father of corruption here prospered both in Europe and America, that every thing yields to it. Dumas has been at Passy some weeks, but is not permitted to come near me. Sayre tells me, his object is to get the agency for a loan into the hands of a French house. If he offers good *private* reasons, it will embarrass the good Doctor exceedingly, because the house of Grand, in whose hands it is at present, is in partnership with Deane, (in which probably the Doctor may share,) and therefore it will wound those honorable and friendly feelings, which bind them together. As to the public, that is out of the question." — *Paris, August 3d*, 1779.

Such were the attempts of Mr. Lee to excite the prejudice of Congress against Dr Franklin; such his secret artifices to supersede him; and such the insinuations and charges, with which his correspondence abounded whilst he was a public agent in Europe, not only against Franklin, but against several others of the best and most distinguished patriots of the revolution.

no good end, as he was persuaded, that what weighed with Dr. Franklin would weigh also with them; and therefore desired, that no mention might be made of his having offered such propositions, or even of his having been here on such business; but that the whole might be buried in oblivion, agreeably to what had been stipulated by Mr. Pulteney, and agreed to by Dr. Franklin, before the propositions were produced; which Dr. Franklin accordingly promised.

W. ALEXANDER.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 29 March, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I did receive the letter you mentioned to have enclosed for Mr. Carmichael, in yours of the 25th of February. I had before received a letter from him, dated at Cadiz, acquainting me, that he was just setting out for Madrid, and desiring I would send him a credit there for two hundred louis. Mr. F. Grand, our banker here, had undertaken to do this with his correspondent, a banker there. I, not knowing how to address your letter to Mr. Carmichael at Madrid, sent it to Mr. Grand's, to be put under his cover to his banker, who might deliver it to Mr. Carmichael, as he would necessarily find out his lodging, to acquaint him with the credit.

The day after Sir George Grand was gone for Holland, his brother came to me, and, expressing a great deal of concern and vexation, told me, that Sir George, seeing that letter on his desk, said, this superscription is M. Dumas's handwriting; and some time afterwards came to him with the letter in his hand open, saying, this letter is full of ingratitude, (or some words to that

purpose,) and I will carry it to Holland and show it to the ambassador; and that he had accordingly carried it away with him, notwithstanding all that was or could be said to the contrary; that it gave him infinite pain to acquaint me with this action of his brother, but he thought it right I should know the truth. I did not mention this to you before, hoping that, upon reflection, Sir George would not show the letter to the ambassador, but seal it up again and send it forward; and I was desirous to avoid increasing the misunderstanding between you and Sir George. But, as I understood by yours to M. Boudoin, that he has actually done it, I see no reason to keep it longer a secret from you. If I had known it to be a letter of consequence, I should nevertheless have taken the same method of forwarding it, not having the least suspicion, that any person in that house would have taken so unwarrantable a liberty with it. But I am now exceedingly sorry that I did not rather send it to the Spanish ambassador's. Let me know, in your next, what you may think proper to communicate to me of the contents of it. I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 30 March, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you yesterday, relating to the affair of your letter to Mr. Carmichael, that you might know exactly the truth of the transaction. On reflection, I think it proper to add, that what I wrote was for your satisfaction only; and that, as the making it public would give infinite pain to a very worthy man, Mr. F. Grand, who would then appear in the light of *délateur de*

son frère, and it can serve no other purpose but that of vengeance on Sir George, and be of no advantage to you, I must insist on your generosity in keeping it a secret to yourself. In this you will also very much oblige me, who would by no means have my name publicly mentioned on this occasion; and I depend on your compliance.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ROSS.

Passy, 22 April, 1780.

SIR,

I duly received your favors of the 14th and 17th instant. I am sorry to understand from you, that the woollens are in such a situation, as to endanger their being lost to the States, but do not see why it should be expected of me to point out a vessel for them to be shipped in, or to approve or accept any contract you may make for the freight of them. The affair is yours. I never had any thing to do with it. I know nothing of it, and am quite sick of meddling, as I have been too often induced to do, with a kind of business that I am utterly unacquainted with.

If you like Messrs. Gourlade and Moylan's vessel to send them in, and approve of their terms, but want my assistance to pay the freight, I will help you so far. Your retaining the sailcloth, and linens, as a security for the payment of your advances, is what I suppose you have a right to do. I am sure I have none to make any objection to it; nor should I make any, if you thought fit to keep the cloth also. The long and fruitless attention you mention, without receiving relief from an order of Congress, which you suppose in my possession, was not occasioned by any

fault of mine, since I never gave you any expectation of paying your balance, and have done all in my power, that the order required of me. Indeed, I cannot find among the papers any order relating to your affairs. I wish to see a copy of that you mention. If I remember right, it was only an order, that you should settle your accounts with the Commissioners here, which is done; not an order that they should pay the balance.

I thank you for your kind offer of carrying letters for me, and shall trouble you with a few; one to our friend Mr. Morris; and I heartily wish you a prosperous voyage.

I am exceedingly grieved at the discontents you mention among the people of the *Alliance*. Unforeseen accidents have occasioned delays in procuring for them their prize money; but the exactest justice will be done them as soon as possible. I know not what the manœuvres are that you mention, which every American will ever consider as an insult offered to the United States. I am sorry to see, in some of our countrymen, a disposition on all occasions to censure and exclaim against the conduct of this court against us, without being well acquainted with facts, or considering the many and substantial benefits we have received, and are continually receiving, from its friendship and good will to us. With much esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 23 April, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I am much pleased with the account you give me, of the disposition with which the proposals from the

Empress of Russia have been received, and desire to be informed, from time to time, of the progress of that interesting business.

I shall be glad to hear of your reconciliation with the ambassador, because a continuance of your difference will be extremely inconvenient. Permit me to tell you frankly, what I formerly hinted to you, that I apprehend you suffer yourself too easily to be led into personal prejudices by interested people, who would engross all our confidence to themselves. From this source have arisen, I imagine, the charges and suspicions you have insinuated to me against several, who have always declared a friendship for us, in Holland. It is right that you should have an opportunity of giving the *carte du pays* to Mr. Laurens, when he arrives in Holland. But if, in order to serve your particular friends, you fill his head with these prejudices, you will hurt him and them, and perhaps yourself. There does not appear to me the least probability, in your supposition, that the ambassador is an enemy to America.

Here has been with me a gentleman from Holland, who was charged, as he said, with a verbal commission from divers cities, to inquire whether it was true that Amsterdam had, as they heard, made a treaty of commerce with the United States, and to express, in that case, their willingness to enter into a similar treaty. Do you know any thing of this? What is become, or likely to become, of the plan of a treaty, formerly under consideration? By a letter from Middlebourg, to which the enclosed is an answer, a cargo seized and sent to America, as English property, is reclaimed, partly on the supposition that free ships make free goods. They ought to do so between England and Holland, because there is a treaty which stipu-

lates it; but, there being yet no treaty between Holland and America to that purpose, I apprehend that the goods being declared by the captain to be English, a neutral ship will not protect them, the law of nations governing in this case, as it did before the treaty above mentioned. Tell me, if you please, your opinion. I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE JUDGES OF THE ADMIRALTY AT CHERBOURG.

Requesting the Release of a Neutral Ship.

Passy, 16 May, 1780

Gentlemen,

I have received the *procès verbaux*, and other papers you did me the honor to send me, agreeable to the eleventh article of the regulation of the 27th of September, 1778. These pieces relate to the taking of the ship *Flora*, whereof was captain Henry Roodenberg, bound from Rotterdam to Dublin, and arrived at Cherbourg, in France, being taken the 7th day of April, by Captain Dowlin, commander of the American privateer the *Black Prince*.

It appears to me, from the abovementioned papers, that the said ship *Flora* is not a good prize, the same belonging to the subjects of a neutral nation; but that the cargo is really the property of the subjects of the King of England, though attempted to be masked as neutral. I do therefore request, that, after the cargo shall be landed, you would cause the said ship *Flora* to be immediately restored to her captain, and that you would oblige the captors to pay him his full freight according to his bills of lading, and also to make good all the damages he may have sustained by plunder or

otherwise; and I further request, that, as the cargo is perishable, you would cause it to be sold immediately, and retain the produce deposited in your hands, to the end, that if any of the freighters, being subjects of their High Mightinesses the States-Generals, will declare upon oath, that certain parts of the said cargo were *bonâ fide* shipped on their own account and risk, and not on the account and risk of any British or Irish subjects, the value of such parts may be restored; or that, if the freighters, or any of them, should think fit to appeal from this judgment to the Congress, the produce so deposited may be disposed of according to their final determination. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM LAROCHEFOUCAULD D'ENVILLE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

La Rocheguyon, 22 May, 1780.

SIR,

The residence of your grandson at Geneva makes me hope, that the citizens of that town may have some claim to your kind attention. It is with this hope, that I ask it for two young men, whom the love of glory and of liberty draws to America. One of them is named Gallatin; he is nineteen years old, well informed for his age, of an excellent character thus far, with much natural talent. The name of the other is Ser. They have concealed their project from their parents, and therefore we cannot tell where they will land. It is supposed, however, that they are going to Philadelphia, or to the Continental army. One of my friends gives me this information, with the request that I will urge you to favor them with a recommendation. I

shall share in his gratitude, and I beg you, Sir, to be assured of the sentiments with which I have the honor to be, &c.

LAROCHEFOUCAULD D'ENVILLE.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Recommending Baron d'Arendt.

Passy, 22 May, 1780.

SIR,

The Baron d'Arendt, colonel in the armies of the United States, having expressed to me a desire of returning to the service in America, though not entirely cured of his wound, which occasioned his voyage to Europe, I endeavoured to dissuade him from the undertaking. But, he having procured a letter to me from M. de Vergennes, of which I send your Excellency a copy herewith, I have been induced to advance him twenty-five louis d'ors towards enabling him to proceed. To justify his long absence, he intends laying before Congress some letters from William Lee, which he thinks will be sufficient for that purpose. With great respect, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Service of a French Frigate. — Alliance with France. — Count d'Estaing.

Boston, 23 May, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received some months past your letter from Passy, dated October 27th, 1779, and lately a copy of it by the Marquis de la Fayette, who arrived here in the *Her-*

mione, with M. Corny. As the arrival of the Marquis diffused a general joy, every expression of it was given here, that circumstances would allow, and particular respects paid by the government, as well as the people, to this prudent and gallant young nobleman, who keeps the cause of America so warm at his heart. In these respects M. Corny had his share, as well as Captain Latouche, commander of the frigate. The former, a gentleman of letters and great politeness, who acquired much esteem in this town in a little time, is gone on to head-quarters, and from thence to Congress; the latter, who offered the service of the frigate he commanded to the government of this State in the true spirit of the alliance, has just returned from a short cruise on our coast undertaken at the desire of the Council. He has visited Penobscot, taken a near view of the fort, made two British sloops-of-war commanded by Mowat, who burnt Falmouth, retire up the river, brought us an accurate plan of the fortress, and done every thing that time and circumstances would allow for our service. The presence of this frigate, under the command of so brave an officer, and so warmly affected to the common cause, will be of great advantage to the trade of this State, and particularly to the supply of this town with wood, which has been at an exorbitant price since the enemy have taken possession of Penobscot. Such instances of friendship make the most agreeable impressions on the minds of the people here, and cultivate the alliance; and I cannot but observe with pleasure evident marks of the growing friendship between the two nations.

It is impossible, my dear Sir, that I should ever lose the deep respect, and affection I have for you, *dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.* Your friendship has united two things in my bosom that

seldom meet, pride and consolation; it has been the honor and balm of my life. It has much affected me, that the turbulence and uncertainty of the times, together with the weakness of my nerves, which has often unfitted me for writing, should occasion to your view any semblance of neglect. I confess, I have not written so often as my heart dictated; but I have written repeatedly. I have been the more concerned at the miscarriage of my letters, because they contained some things relating to the Count d'Estaing, for whom I have the greatest respect; whose great talents as a commander, whose intrepidity, vigilance, secrecy, assiduity, quick decision, prudence, and unabated affection to the common cause, united with a surprising command of himself in delicate circumstances, and on the most trying occasions (an instance of which we had at Newport), I can never sufficiently commend. I thought it ought to be known at the court of France, in what high estimation he was held here; but for whose uncommon prudence, the alliance might have received, from the indiscretion of some among us, an early wound.

Mr. Bradford, to whom I commit the care of this letter, intended to have sailed directly to Holland in his way to France; but the owners have altered the destination of the vessel first to Gottenburg. As another vessel will soon sail for France or Holland, I hope to write more particularly by that; and am, Sir, with every sentiment of esteem and friendship, &c.

Samuel Cooper.

TO AN AGENT FOR AMERICAN CRUISERS.

Free Ships make free Goods.

Passy, 30 May, 1780.

Sir,

In my last, of the 27th instant, I omitted one thing I had intended, viz. to desire you would give absolute orders to your cruisers not to bring in any more Dutch vessels, though charged with enemy's goods, unless contraband. All the neutral States of Europe seem at present disposed to change what had before been deemed the law of nations, to wit, that an enemy's property may be taken wherever found; and to establish a rule, that free ships shall make free goods. This rule is itself so reasonable, and of a nature to be so beneficial to mankind, that I cannot but wish it may become general. And I make no doubt but that the Congress will agree to it, in as full an extent as France and Spain. In the mean time, and until I have received their orders on the subject, it is my intention to condemn no more English goods found in Dutch vessels, unless contraband; of which I thought it right to give you this previous notice, that you may avoid the trouble and expense likely to arise from such captures, and from the detention of them for a decision. With great regard, and best wishes for the success of your enterprise, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Trouble of maritime Affairs. — Difficulty of meeting Drafts. — Capture of neutral Vessels. — Rule adopted by the European Powers. — Unfavorable Disposition in Europe towards England. — Difficulties in the Exchange of Prisoners.

Passy, 31 May, 1780.

SIR,

I wrote to your Excellency the 4th of March past, to go by this ship, the *Alliance*, then expected to sail immediately. But, the men refusing to go till paid their shares of prize money, and sundry difficulties arising with regard to the sale and division, she has been detained thus long, to my great mortification, and I am yet uncertain when I shall be able to get her out. The trouble and vexation which these maritime affairs give me is inconceivable. I have often expressed to Congress my wish to be relieved from them, and that some person better acquainted with them, and better situated, might be appointed to manage them; much money as well as time would, I am sure, be saved by such an appointment.

The *Alliance* is to carry some of the cannon long since ordered, and as much of the powder, arms, and clothing (furnished by government here), as she, together with a frigate, the *Ariel*, we have borrowed, can take. I hope they may between them take the whole, with what has been provided by Mr. Ross. This gentleman has, by what I can learn, served the Congress well in the quality and prices of the goods he has purchased. I wish it had been in my power to discharge his balance here, for which he has importuned me rather too much. We furnished him with

about twenty thousand pounds sterling to discharge his first accounts, which he was to replace as soon as he received remittances from the Committee of Commerce. This has not been done, and he now demands another nearly equal sum, urging as before, that the credit of the States as well as his own will be hurt by my refusal.

Mr. Bingham too complains of me for refusing some of his drafts, as very hurtful to his credit, though he owns he had no orders from Congress to authorize those drafts. I never undertook to provide for more than the payment of the interest bills of the first loan. The Congress have drawn on me very considerably for other purposes, which has sometimes greatly embarrassed me, but I have duly accepted and found means to pay their drafts; so that their credit in Europe has been well supported. But, if every agent of Congress in different parts of the world is permitted to run in debt, and draw upon me at pleasure to support his credit, under the idea of its being necessary to do so for the honor of Congress, the difficulty upon me will be too great, and I may in fine be obliged to protest the interest bills. I therefore beg that a stop may be put to such irregular proceedings.

Had the loans proposed to be made in Europe succeeded, these practices might not have been so inconvenient; but the number of agents from separate States running all over Europe, and asking to borrow money, has given such an idea of our distress and poverty as makes everybody afraid to trust us. I am much pleased to find, that Congress has at length resolved to borrow of our own people, by making their future bills bear interest. This interest duly paid in hard money, to such as require hard money, will fix the value of the principal, and even make the payment of

the interest in hard money for the most part unnecessary, provided always that the quantity of principal be not excessive.

A great clamor has lately been made here by some merchants, who say, they have large sums in their hands of paper money in America, and that they are ruined by some resolution of Congress, which reduces its value to one part in forty. As I have had no letter explaining this matter, I have only been able to say, that it is probably misunderstood, and that I am confident the Congress have not done, nor will do, any thing unjust towards strangers, who have given us credit. I have indeed been almost ready to complain, that I hear so little and so seldom from Congress, or from the Committee of Correspondence; but I know the difficulty of communication, and the frequent interruption it meets in this time of war. I have not yet received a line this year, and the letters written by the *Confederacy*, as I suppose some must have been written by her, have not yet come to hand.

I mentioned in a former letter, my having communicated to Mr. Johnson of Nantes, the order of Congress appointing him to examine the account, and his acceptance of the appointment. Nothing, however, has yet been done in pursuance of it; for, Mr. Deane having written that he might be expected here by the middle of March, and as his presence would be very useful in explaining the mercantile transactions, I have waited his arrival to request Mr. Johnson's coming to Paris, that his detention here from his affairs at Nantes might be as short as possible. Mr. Deane has not yet come; but, as we have heard of the arrival of the *Fendant* in Martinique, in which ship he took his passage, we imagine he may be here in some of the first ships from that island.

The medal for M. de Fleury is done and delivered to his order, he being absent; I shall get the others prepared as soon as possible, by the same hand, if I cannot find a cheaper equally good, which I am now inquiring after. Two thousand livres appear to me a great sum for the work.

With my last I sent a copy of my memorial to the court of Denmark. I have since received an answer from the minister of that court for foreign affairs, a copy of which I enclose. It referred me to the Danish minister here, with whom I have had a conference on the subject. He was full of professions of the good will of his court to the United States, and would excuse the delivery of our prizes to the English, as done in conformity to treaties, which it was necessary to observe. He had not the treaty to show me, and I have not been able to find such a treaty on inquiry. After my memorial, our people left at Bergen were treated with the greatest kindness by an order from court, their expenses during the winter that they had been detained there all paid, necessaries furnished to them for their voyage to Dunkirk, and a passage thither found for them all at the King's expense. I have not dropped the application for a restitution, but shall continue to push it, not without some hopes of success. I wish, however, to receive instructions relating to it, and I think a letter from Congress to that court might forward the business; for I believe they are sensible they have done wrong, and are apprehensive of the inconveniences that may follow. With this I send the protests taken at Bergen against the proceeding.

The *Alliance*, in her last cruise, met with and sent to America a Dutch ship, supposed to have on board an English cargo. The owners have made application to

me. I have assured them, that they might depend on the justice of our courts, and that, if they could prove their property there, it would be restored. M. Dumas has written to me about it. I enclose his letter, and wish despatch may be given to the business, as well to prevent the inconveniences of a misunderstanding with Holland, as for the sake of justice.

A ship of that nation has been brought in here by the *Black Prince*, having an English cargo. I consulted with Messrs. Adams and Dana, who informed me, that it was an established rule with us in such cases to confiscate the cargo, but to release the ship, paying her freight, &c. This I have accordingly ordered in the case of this ship, and hope it may be satisfactory. But it is a critical time with respect to such cases; for, whatever may formerly have been the law of nations, all the neutral powers at the instance of Russia seem at present disposed to change it, and to enforce the rule that *free ships shall make free goods*, except in the case of contraband. Denmark, Sweden, and Holland have already acceded to the proposition, and Portugal is expected to follow. France and Spain, in their answers, have also expressed their approbation of it. I have, therefore, instructed our privateers to bring in no more neutral ships, as such prizes occasion much litigation, and create ill blood.

The *Alliance*, Captain Landais, took two Swedes in coming hither, who demand of us for damages, one upward of sixty thousand livres, and the other near five hundred pounds sterling; and I cannot well see how the demand is to be settled. In the newspapers that I send, the Congress will see authentic pieces expressing the sense of the European powers on the subject of neutral navigation. I hope to receive the sense of Congress for my future government, and for

the satisfaction of the neutral nations now entering into the confederacy, which is considered here as a great stroke against England.

In truth, that country seems to have no friends on this side of the water; no other nation wishes it success in its present war, but rather desires to see it effectually humbled; no one, not even their old friends the Dutch, will afford them any assistance. Such is the mischievous effect of pride, insolence, and injustice on the affairs of nations, as well as on those of private persons!

The English party in Holland is daily diminishing, and the States are arming vigorously to maintain the freedom of their navigation. The consequence may possibly be a war with England, or a serious disposition in that mad nation to save what they can by a timely peace.

Our cartel for the exchange of American prisoners has been some time at a stand. When our little squadron brought near five hundred into Holland, England would not at first exchange Americans for them there, expecting to take them in their passage to France. But at length an agreement was made between the English and French ambassadors, and I was persuaded to give them up, on a promise of having an equal number of English delivered to my order at Morlaix. So those were exchanged for Frenchmen. But the English now refuse to take any English in exchange for Americans, that have not been taken by American cruisers. They also refuse to send me any Americans in exchange for their prisoners released, and sent home by the two flags of truce from Boston. Thus they give up all pretensions to equity and honor, and govern themselves by caprice, passion, and transient views of present interest.

Be pleased to present my duty to Congress, and believe me to be, with great respect, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Recommending Commodore Jones.

Passy, 1 June, 1780.

SIR,

Commodore Jones, who by his bravery and conduct has done great honor to the American flag, desires to have that also of presenting a line to the hands of your Excellency. I cheerfully comply with his request, in recommending him to the notice of Congress, and to your Excellency's protection; though his actions are a more effectual recommendation, and render any from me unnecessary. It gives me, however, an opportunity of showing my readiness to do justice to merit, and of professing the esteem and respect with which I am your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

State of Affairs in Europe. — Neutral Trade.

Passy, 3 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of March 31st, acquainting me with your having engaged in M. de la Fréte's affairs, on my recommendation. I thank you very much, and beg you to be assured that any recommendation of yours will be regarded by me with the greatest attention. The letter you enclosed to M. Dumas

is forwarded to him. We are impatient to hear from America, no account of the operations before Charleston, later than the 9th of March, having yet come to hand.

Every thing here in Europe continues to wear a good face. Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland are raising a strong naval force to establish the free navigation for neutral ships, and of all their cargoes, though belonging to enemies, except contraband, that is, military stores. France and Spain have approved of it, and it is likely to become henceforth the law of nations, that *free ships make free goods.* England does not like this confederacy. I wish they would extend it still farther, and ordain, that unarmed trading ships, as well as fishermen and farmers, should be respected, as working for the common benefit of mankind, and never be interrupted in their operations, even by national enemies; but let those only fight with one another, whose trade it is, and who are armed and paid for the purpose. With great and sincere esteem. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Neutral Ships. — Private Property ought not to be disturbed in Time of War. — Letter of General Clinton.

Passy, 5 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The gentleman, whose name you wished to know, in one of your late letters, is *M. Westhuysen, Echevin et Conseiller de la Ville de Harlem.* I shall probably send an order to that place for some of the types, of which you have sent me the prices, *before I leave Europe.* I think them very good and not dear.

A Dutch ship belonging to Messrs. Little, Dale, & Co., of Rotterdam, being brought into France as having an English cargo on board, I have followed your opinion with regard to the condemnation of the cargo, which I think the more right, as the English have in the West Indies confiscated several of our cargoes found in Dutch ships. But, to show respect to the declaration of the Empress of Russia, I have written to the owners of our privateers a letter, of which I enclose a copy, together with a copy of the judgment, for your use, if you hear of any complaint.* I approve much of the principles of the confederacy of the neutral powers, and am not only for respecting the ships as the house of a friend, though containing the goods of an enemy, but I even wish, for the sake of humanity, that the law of nations may be further improved, by determining, that, even in time of war, all those kinds of people, who are employed in procuring subsistence for the species, or in exchanging the necessaries or conveniences of life, which are for the common benefit of mankind, such as husbandmen on their lands, fishermen in their barques, and traders in unarmed vessels, shall be permitted to prosecute their several innocent and useful employments without interruption or molestation, and nothing taken from them, even when wanted by an enemy, but on paying a fair price for the same.

I think you have done well to print the letter of Clinton; for, though I have myself had suspicions whether some parts of it were really written by him, yet I have no doubt of the facts stated, and think the piece valuable, as giving a true account of the British and American affairs in that quarter. On the

* See the letter to "An Agent of American Cruisers," above, p. 458; and the *Judgment*, p. 453.

whole, it has the appearance of a letter written by a general, who did not approve of the expedition he was sent upon, who had no opinion of the judgment of those who drew up his instructions, who had observed, that the preceding commanders, Gage, Burgoyne, Keppel, and the Howes, had all been censured by the ministers for having unsuccessfully attempted to execute injudicious instructions with unequal force; and he therefore wrote such a letter, not merely to give the information contained in it, but to be produced in his vindication, when he might be recalled, and his want of success charged upon him as a crime; though, in truth, owing to the folly of the ministers, who had ordered him on impracticable projects, and persisted in them, notwithstanding his faithful informations, without furnishing the necessary number of troops he had demanded. In this view, much of the letter may be accounted for, without supposing it fictitious; and therefore, if not genuine, it is ingeniously written. But you will easily conceive, that, if the state of public facts it contains were known in America to be false, such a publication there would have been absurd, and of no possible use to the cause of the country.

I have written to M. Neufville concerning the bills you mention. I have no orders or advice about them, know nothing of them, and therefore cannot prudently meddle with them; especially as the funds in my power are not more than sufficient to answer the Congress bills for interest and other inevitable demands. He desired to know, whether I would engage to reimburse him, if he should accept and pay them; but, as I know not the amount of them, I cannot enter into any such engagement; for though, if they are genuine Congress bills, I am persuaded all possible

care will be taken by Congress to provide for their punctual payment, yet there are so many accidents, by which remittances are delayed or intercepted in the time of war, that I dare not hazard for these new bills, the possibility of being rendered unable to pay the others. With great esteem, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOHN JAY.*

Letters broken open. — Bills of Exchange. — Print of Dr. Franklin.

Passy, 13 June, 1780.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday, and not before, is come to hand your favor of April 14th, with the packets and despatches from Congress, which you sent me by a French gentleman to Nantes.

Several of them appear to have been opened; the paper round the seals being smoked and burnt, as with the flame of a candle used to soften the wax, and the impression defaced. The curiosity of people in this time of war is unbounded. Some of them only want to see news; but others want to find, through interested views, what chance there is of a speedy peace. Mr. Ross has undertaken to forward the letters to England. I have not seen them; but he tells me they have all been opened. I am glad, however, to receive the despatches from Congress, as they communicate to me Mr. Adams's instructions, and other particulars of which I have been long ignorant.

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* Mr. Jay was appointed minister plenipotentiary to Spain on the 27th of September, 1779, and arrived at Madrid in the following April.

I am very sensible of the weight of your observation, "that a constant interchange of intelligence and attentions, between the public servants at the different courts, are necessary to procure to their constituents all the advantages capable of being derived from their appointment." I shall endeavour to perform my part with you, as well to have the pleasure of your correspondence, as from a sense of duty. But my time is more taken up with matters extraneous to the functions of a minister, than you can possibly imagine. I have written often to the Congress to establish consuls in the ports, and ease me of what relates to maritime and mercantile affairs; but no notice has yet been taken of my request.

A number of bills of exchange, said to be drawn by order of Congress on Mr. Laurens, is arrived in Holland. A merchant there has desired to know of me, whether, if he accepts them, I will engage to reimburse him. I have no orders or advice about them from Congress. Do you know to what amount they have drawn? I doubt I cannot safely meddle with them.

Mrs. Jay does me much honor in desiring to have one of the prints, that have been made here of her countryman. I send what is said to be the best of five or six engraved by different hands, from different paintings. The verses at the bottom are truly extravagant. But you must know, that the desire of pleasing, by a perpetual rise of compliments in this polite nation, has so used up all the common expressions of approbation, that they are become flat and insipid, and to use them almost implies censure. Hence music, that formerly might be sufficiently praised when it was called *bonne*, to go a little farther they called it *excellente*, then *superbe*, *magnifique*, *exquise*, *céleste*, all which

being in their turns worn out, there only remains *divine*; and, when that is grown as insignificant as its predecessors, I think they must return to common speech and common sense; as, from vying with one another in fine and costly paintings on their coaches, since I first knew the country, not being able to go farther in that way, they have returned lately to plain carriages, painted without arms or figures, in one uniform color.

The league of neutral nations to protect their commerce is now established. Holland, offended by fresh insults from England, is arming vigorously. That nation has madly brought itself into the greatest distress, and has not a friend in the world. With great and sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.*

Sir John Dalrymple. — The Marquis de Lafayette. — Riots in London. — Madame Brillon.

Passy, 17 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your favors of the 22d past came duly to hand. Sir John Dalrymple has been here some time, but I hear nothing of his political operations. The learned talk of the discovery he has made in the Escurial Library, of forty Epistles of Brutus, a missing part of Tacitus, and a piece of Seneca, that have never yet been printed, which excite much curiosity. He has not been with me, and I am told, by one of his friends,

* Secretary to the American Legation at Madrid, while Mr. Jay was minister there; and afterwards for many years *Chargé d'Affaires* of the United States at the court of Spain.

that, though he wished to see me, he did not think it prudent. So I suppose I shall have no communication with him; for I shall not seek it. As Count de Vergennes has mentioned nothing to me of any memorial from him, I suppose he has not presented it; perhaps discouraged by the reception it met with in Spain. So I wish, for curiosity's sake, you would send me a copy of it.*

The Marquis de Lafayette arrived safely at Boston on the 28th of April, and, it is said, gave expectations of the coming of a squadron and troops. The vessel that brings this left New London the 2d of May; her captain reports, that the siege of Charleston was raised, the troops attacked in their retreat, and Clinton killed; but this wants confirmation. London has been in the utmost confusion for seven or eight days. The beginning of this month, a mob of fanatics, joined by a mob of rogues, burnt and destroyed property to the amount, it is said, of a million sterling. Chapels of foreign ambassadors, houses of members of Parliament that had promoted the act for favoring Catholics, and the houses of many private persons of that religion, were pillaged and consumed, or pulled down, to the number of fifty; among the rest, Lord Mansfield's is burnt, with all his furniture, pictures, books, and papers. Thus he, who approved the burning of American houses, has had fire brought home to him. He himself was horribly scared, and Governor Hutchinson, it is said, died outright of the fright. The mob, tired with roaring and rioting seven days and nights, were at length suppressed, and quiet restored on the 9th, in the evening. Next day Lord George Gordon was committed to the tower.

* See a translation of this curious *Memorial* in the APPENDIX, No. II

Enclosed I send you the little piece you desire.* To understand it rightly you should be acquainted with some few circumstances. The person to whom it was addressed is Madame Brillon, a lady of most respectable character and pleasing conversation; mistress of an amiable family in this neighbourhood, with which I spend an evening twice in every week. She has, among other elegant accomplishments, that of an excellent musician; and, with her daughters, who sing prettily, and some friends who play, she kindly entertains me and my grandson with little concerts, a cup of tea, and a game of chess. I call this *my Opera*, for I rarely go to the Opera at Paris.

The Moulin Joli is a little island in the Seine about two leagues hence, part of the country-seat of another friend,† where we visit every summer, and spend a day in the pleasing society of the ingenious, learned, and very polite persons who inhabit it. At the time when the letter was written, all conversations at Paris were filled with disputes about the music of Gluck and Picini, a German and Italian musician, who divided the town into violent parties. A friend of this lady having obtained a copy of it, under a promise not to give another, did not observe that promise; so that many have been taken, and it is become as public as such a thing can well be, that is not printed; but I could not dream of its being heard of at Madrid! The thought was partly taken from a little piece of some unknown writer, which I met with fifty years since in a newspaper, and which the sight of the Ephemera brought to my recollection. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

* The Ephemera. See Vol. II. p. 177.

† Monsieur Watelet.

TO JOHN FOTHERGILL.

Passy, 19 June, 1780.

My dear old friend, Dr. Fothergill, may assure Lady H.* of my respects, and of any service in my power to render her, or her affairs in America. I believe matters in Georgia cannot much longer continue in their present situation, but will return to that state in which they were, when her property, and that of our common friend G. W.,† received the protection she acknowledges.

I rejoiced most sincerely to hear of your recovery from the dangerous illness by which I lost my very valuable friend Peter Collinson. As I am sometimes apprehensive of the same disorder, I wish to know the means that were used and succeeded in your case; and shall be exceedingly obliged to you for communicating them when you can do it conveniently.

Be pleased to remember me respectfully to your good sister, and to our worthy friend, David Barclay, who I make no doubt laments with you and me, that the true pains we took together to prevent all this horrible mischief proved ineffectual.‡ I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* Probably Lady Huntington, who contributed towards the establishment of Whitefield's Orphan House in Georgia. See a further account of her benevolent plans in *Washington's Writings*, Vol. IX. pp. 92, 96.

† George Whitefield.

‡ Alluding to the negotiations for bringing about a reconciliation between Great Britain and the colonies, which took place just before Dr. Franklin left England in the spring of 1775, and in which Dr. Fothergill, David Barclay, and Lord Howe were concerned. See Vol. V. p. 1.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 22 June, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Enclosed you have a letter for the gentleman you recommend to me. He seems to be a man of abilities. The words, "*before I leave Europe*," had no relation to my particular immediate intention, but to the general one I flatter myself with, of being able to return and spend there the small remains of life that are left me.

I have written distinctly to Messrs. de Neufville concerning those bills. I hear that was at Newbern the 12th of April, and soon to sail from thence, or from Virginia for France. Probably he might not sail in some weeks after, as vessels are often longer in fitting out than was expected. If it is the *Fier Rodérique*, a fifty-gun ship, that he comes in, I have just heard that she would not sail till the middle of May. Herewith you have the judgment relating to the *Flora*, which I thought had been sent before. The mischiefs done by the mob in London are astonishing. They were, I heard, within an ace of destroying the bank, with all the books relating to the funds, which would have created infinite confusion.

I am grieved at the loss of Charleston. Let me hope soon to hear better news from the operations of the French and Spanish forces gone to America.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. As the English do not allow that we can make legal prizes, they certainly cannot detain the Dutch ship, the *Berkenloos*, on pretence that it was become American property before they took it. For the rest, there is no doubt but the Congress will do

what shall appear to be just, on a proper representation of facts laid before them, which the owners should appoint some persons in America to do. Those gentlemen may depend on my rendering them every service in my power.

TO M. DE SARTINE.*

Passy, 27 June, 1780.

SIR,

I am very thankful to his Majesty, in behalf of the suffering owners of the brigantine *Fair Play*, for his goodness in ordering to be paid to them fifteen thousand livres out of your treasury. But as that sum in conceived by your Excellency to be a favorable allowance, in consideration that the misfortune happened by the fault of Captain Giddins, and the owners apprehend there was no fault on his part, (being so informed by deposition upon oath,) and none was mentioned or supposed in the governor of Guadaloupe's first letter to your Excellency on the subject, I fear they will think the sum very small as an indemnification for the loss of their vessel, valued at six thousand pounds sterling.

I therefore request your Excellency would be pleased to examine with some attention the said depositions, and the valuation (of which I enclose the duplicates); and, if, on the whole, you should judge the matter improper to be offered at present for his Majesty's reconsideration, you would at least favor me with the informations, that have been sent to your Excellency from Guadaloupe, of the blamable conduct of the captain, as, by communicating those informations to

* Minister of the Marine Department.

the owners, I may more easily satisfy them of the favorableness of the sum his Majesty has been pleased to grant them.

Your Excellency will perceive by their letter, which I send herewith, that they desire Mr. Jonathan Williams of Nantes might receive for them the sum that should be granted. I am therefore farther to request, that your Excellency would be pleased to give orders to your treasurer to accept and pay his drafts for the said fifteen thousand livres. I am, with great respect, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

American Paper Money held by Foreigners.

Translation.

Versailles, 30 June, 1780.

SIR,

I did not until this day receive the letter, which you did me the honor to write to me on the 24th of this month.

You request, in consequence of an application made to you by Mr. Adams, that the orders given to the Chevalier de la Luzerne relative to a resolution of Congress of the 18th of March last should be revoked, or at least suspended; as that plenipotentiary is able to prove, that those orders are founded on false reports.

Mr. Adams, on the 22d, sent me a long dissertation on the subject in question; but it contains only abstract reasonings, hypothesis, and calculations, which have no real foundation, or which at least do not apply to the subjects of the King, and, in fine, principles, than which nothing can be less analogous to the al-

liance subsisting between his Majesty and the United States.

By this, Sir, you can judge, that the pretended proofs mentioned by Mr. Adams are not of a nature to induce us to change our opinion, and consequently cannot effect a revocation or suspension of the orders given to the Chevalier de la Luzerne. The King is so firmly persuaded, Sir, that your private opinion respecting the effects of that resolution of Congress, as far as it concerns strangers, and especially Frenchmen, differs from that of Mr. Adams, that he is not apprehensive of laying you under any embarrassment by requesting you to support the representations, which his minister is ordered to make to Congress. And, that you may be enabled to do this with a complete knowledge of the case, his Majesty has commanded me to send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Adams, the observations of that plenipotentiary, and my answer to him.*

The King expects that you will lay the whole before Congress; and his Majesty flatters himself, that that assembly, inspired with principles different from those which Mr. Adams has discovered, will convince his Majesty, that they know how to prize those marks of favor, which the King has constantly shown to the United States.

However, Sir, the King does not undertake to point out to Congress the means, which may be employed to indemnify the French, who are holders of the paper money. His Majesty, with respect to that, relies entirely on the justice and wisdom of that assembly. I have the honor to be, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. V. pp. 208, 213, 232.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Foreign Merchants ought not to suffer from the Depreciation of American Paper Money.

Passy, 10 July, 1780.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me, dated June 30th, together with the papers accompanying it, containing the correspondence of Mr. Adams. I have taken some pains to understand the subject, and obtain information of facts from persons recently arrived, having received no letters myself that explain it. I cannot say, that I yet perfectly understand it; but in this I am clear, that if the operation directed by Congress in their resolution of March the 18th occasions, from the necessity of the case, some inequality of justice, that inconvenience ought to fall wholly on the inhabitants of the States, who reap with it the advantages obtained by the measure; and that the greatest care should be taken, that foreign merchants, particularly the French, who are our creditors, do not suffer by it. This I am so confident the Congress will do, that I do not think any representations of mine necessary to persuade them to it.

I shall not fail, however, to lay the whole before them; and I beg that the King may be assured, that their sentiments, and those of the Americans in general, with regard to the alliance, as far as I have been able to learn them, not only from private letters, but from authentic public facts, differ widely from those that seem to be expressed by Mr. Adams in his letter to your Excellency, and are filled with the strongest impressions of the friendship of France, of the generous manner in which his Majesty was pleased to

enter into an equal treaty with us, and of the great obligations our country is under for the important aids he has since afforded us. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Conciliatory Bill rejected in the House of Commons.

London, 17 July, 1780.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed I send you a copy of a conciliatory bill, which was proposed in the House of Commons on the 27th of last month.* It was rejected. You and I have had so much intercourse upon the subject of restoring peace between Great Britain and America, that I think there is nothing further left to be said upon the subject. You will perceive, by the general tenor of the bill, that it proposes a general power to treat. It chalks out a line of negotiation in very general terms. I remain in the sentiments which I ever have, and which I believe I ever shall entertain, viz. those of seeking peace upon honorable terms. I shall always be ready, and most desirous, to join in any measure which may facilitate peace. I am ever your most affectionate

D. HARTLEY.

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* By the tenor of this bill, the King was empowered "to treat, consult, and finally to agree upon the means of restoring peace with the Provinces of North America." Nothing was said in it concerning independence, nor does such a concession on the part of Great Britain seem to have been designed. A cessation of hostilities was recommended, and a repeal of all the acts of Parliament, of which the colonies had complained, for the space of ten years. The project was more favorable to the United States than Lord North's bill sent out by the Commissioners in 1778, but was not such, if it had succeeded in Parliament, as Congress would have accepted. See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 157.

TO ALEXANDER SMALL.*

Passy, 22 July, 1780.

You see, my dear Sir, that I was not afraid my masters would take it amiss, if I ran to see an old friend, though in the service of their enemy. They are reasonable enough to allow, that differing politics should not prevent the intercommunication of philosophers, who study and converse for the benefit of mankind. But you have doubts about coming to dine with me. I suppose you will not venture it; your refusal will not indeed do so much honor to the generosity and good nature of your government, as to your sagacity. You know your people, and I do not expect you. I think, too, that in friendship I ought not to make you more visits, as I intended; but I send my grandson to pay his duty to his physician.

You inquired about my gout, and I forgot to acquaint you, that I had treated it a little cavalierly in its two last accesses. Finding one night that my foot gave me more pain after it was covered warm in bed, I put it out of bed naked; and, perceiving it easier, I let it remain longer than I at first designed, and at length fell asleep leaving it there till morning. The pain did not return, and I grew well. Next winter, having a second attack, I repeated the experiment; not with such immediate success in dismissing the gout, but constantly with the effect of rendering it less painful, so that it permitted me to sleep every night. I should mention, that it was my son who gave me the first intimation of this practice. He being in the

* A surgeon of eminence in the British army, then passing through Paris; brother to Colonel Small, who particularly distinguished himself by his humanity at the battle of Bunker's Hill, near Boston. — W. T. F.

old opinion, that the gout was to be drawn out by transpiration; and, having heard me say, that perspiration was carried on more copiously when the body was naked, than when clothed, he put his foot out of bed to increase that discharge, and found ease by it, which he thought a confirmation of the doctrine. But this method requires to be confirmed by more experiments, before one can conscientiously recommend it. I give it you, however, in exchange for your receipt of tartar emetic; because the commerce of philosophy as well as other commerce, is best promoted by taking care to make returns. I am ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Capture of Charleston. — Jones and Landais.

Passy, 26 July, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to Messrs. de Neufville by the last post, in answer to theirs of the 14th. I hope they received my letter. It signified, that I could accept the bills drawn on Mr. Laurens. I find, by a vote of Congress on the 4th of March, that they then stopped drawing, and I am informed, no more bills have been issued since. I could not relish those gentlemen's proposal of mortgaging *all our estates*, for the little money Holland is likely to lend us. But I am obliged to them for their zeal in our cause.

I received, and thank you for, the protest relating to the election of the coadjutor. You seem to be too much affected with the taking of Charleston It is so far a damage to us, as it will enable the enemy to exchange a great part of the prisoners we had in our hands; otherwise their affairs will not be much ad-

vanced by it. They have successively been in possession of the capitals of five provinces, viz. Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New York, and Georgia; but were not therefore in possession of the provinces themselves. New York and Georgia still continue their operations as free States; and so I suppose will South Carolina. The cannon will be recovered with the place; if not, our furnaces are constantly at work in making more. The destroying of our ships by the English is only like shaving our beards, which will grow again. Their loss of provinces is like the loss of a limb, which can never again be united to their body. I was sorry to hear of your indisposition. Take care of yourself. Honey is a good thing for obstructions in the reins. I hope your health is by this time reëstablished.

I am less committed than you imagine in the affair between Jones and Landais. The latter was not dispossessed by me of his command, but quitted it. He afterwards took it into his head to resume it, which the former's too long stay at Paris gave him an opportunity of effecting. Captain Jones is going in the *Ariel* frigate to America, where they may settle their affairs as they can.

The captain commandant of Dunkirk, who occasioned the loss of our despatches, is himself taken by the English. I have no doubt of the truth of what Mr. White told you, about the facility with which the tax was collected.

The same Baron de Wulffen has not pleased me, having left little debts behind him unpaid, though I furnished him with twenty guineas. As he had been with his brother at Venloo, before he saw you, where he might get money, I wonder at his borrowing of you.

This will be delivered to you by his Excellency, John Adams, whom I earnestly recommend to your best civilities. He has never been in Holland, and your counsels will be of use to him. My best wishes attend you, being ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Disputes of Jones and Landais. — French Court displeased with Mr. Adams's Correspondence. — Armed Neutrality.

Passy, 9 August, 1780.

SIR,

With this your Excellency will receive a copy of my last, dated May 31st, the original of which, with copies of preceding letters, went by the *Alliance*, Captain Landais, who sailed the beginning of last month, and who I wish may arrive safe in America, being apprehensive, that by her long delay in port, from the mutiny of the people, who after she was ready to sail refused to weigh anchor till their wages were paid, she may fall in the way of the English fleet now out; or that her crew, who have ever been infected with disorder and mutiny, may carry her into England. She had, on her first coming out, a conspiracy for that purpose; besides which her officers and captain quarrelled with each other, the captain with Commodore Jones, and there have been so many broils among them, that it was impossible to get the business forward while she stayed, and she is at length gone, without taking the quantity of stores she was capable of taking, and was ordered to take.

I suppose the conduct of that captain will be inquired into by a court-martial. Captain Jones goes

home in the *Ariel*, a ship we have borrowed of government here, and carries one hundred and forty-six chests of arms, and four hundred barrels of powder. To take the rest of the stores, I have been obliged to freight a ship, which, being well armed and well manned, will, I hope, get in safe. The clothes for ten thousand men are, I think, all made up; there are also arms for fifteen thousand, new and good, with two thousand barrels of powder. Besides this, there is a great quantity of cloth I have bought, of which you will have the invoices sent by Mr. Williams; another large quantity purchased by Mr. Ross; all going in the same ship.*

The little authority we have here to govern our armed ships, and the inconvenience of distance from the ports, occasion abundance of irregularities in the conduct of both men and officers. I hope, therefore, that no more of those vessels will be sent hither, till our code of laws is perfected respecting ships abroad, and proper persons appointed to manage such affairs in the seaports. They give me infinite trouble; and,

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* Captain Landais had been censured and deprived of his command, in consequence of his misconduct while on the cruise with Jones at the time of the capture of the *Serapis*. When Jones was about to depart in the *Alliance* for America, in June, 1780, Landais went to L'Orient without orders, raised a mutiny among the officers and sailors, in consequence of their not having been paid their prize money, and took command of the ship while Jones was absent. An order was obtained from the French government to arrest Landais, but he sailed before the order arrived. Arthur Lee was a passenger in the *Alliance*, and advised Landais to resist the authority of Jones, and take command of the vessel. The passengers had reason to regret this rash measure, however, before they reached Boston, to which port they were bound. Landais behaved in so strange a manner, that it was found necessary to deprive him of his command, and to put the vessel under the charge of the first lieutenant. In a letter to Robert Morris, dated at L'Orient, June 27th, Jones speaks of this affair as follows.

"What gives me the greatest pain is, that, after I had obtained from

though I endeavour to act for the best, it is without satisfaction to myself, being unacquainted with that kind of business. I have often mentioned the appointment of a consul or consuls. The Congress have, perhaps, not yet had time to consider that matter.

Having already sent you, by different conveyances, copies of my proceedings with the court of Denmark, relative to the three prizes delivered up to the English, and requested the instructions of Congress, I hope soon to receive them. I mentioned a letter from the Congress to that court, as what I thought might have a good effect. I have since had more reasons to be of that opinion.

The unexpected delay of Mr. Deane's arrival has retarded the settlement of the joint accounts of the Commission, he having had the chief management of the commercial part, and being therefore best able to explain difficulties. I have just now the pleasure to hear that the *Fier Rodérique*, with the convoy from Virginia, arrived at Bordeaux, all safe except one tobacco ship, that foundered at sea, the men saved; and I have a letter from Mr. Deane that he is at Rochelle,

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the government, the means of transporting to America, under a good protection, the arms and clothing I had already mentioned, Mr. Lee should have found means to defeat my intentions. I thank God, I am of no party, and have no brothers or relations to serve; but I am convinced, that Mr. Lee has acted in this matter merely because I would not become the enemy of the venerable, the wise, and the good Franklin, whose heart, as well as head, does and will always do honor to human nature. I know the great and good in this kingdom better, perhaps, than any other American, who has appeared in Europe since the treaty of alliance; and, if my testimony could add any thing to Franklin's reputation, I could witness the universal veneration and esteem with which his name inspires all ranks, not only at Versailles, and all over this kingdom, but also in Spain and Holland. And I can add, from the testimony of the first characters of other nations, that with them envy itself is dumb when the name of Franklin is but mentioned." — See *Life of Paul Jones*, New York ed., 1833, pp. 261–279.

proposes to stop a few days at Nantes, and then proceed to Paris, when I shall endeavour to see that business completed with all possible expedition.

Mr. Adams has given offence to the court here, by some sentiments and expressions contained in several of his letters written to the Count de Vergennes. I mention this with reluctance, though perhaps it would have been my duty to acquaint you with such a circumstance, even were it not required of me by the minister himself. He has sent me copies of the correspondence, desiring I would communicate them to Congress; and I send them herewith.* Mr. Adams did not show me his letters before he sent them. I have, in a former letter to Mr. Lovell, mentioned some of the inconveniences, that attend the having more than one minister at the same court; one of which inconveniences is, that they do not always hold the same language, and that the impressions made by one, and intended for the service of his constituents, may be effaced by the discourse of the other. It is true, that Mr. Adams's proper business is elsewhere; but, the time not being come for that business, and having nothing else here wherewith to employ himself, he seems to have endeavoured to supply what he may suppose my negotiations defective in. He thinks, as he tells me himself, that America has been too free in expressions of gratitude to France; for that she is more obliged to us than we to her; and that we should show spirit in our applications. I apprehend, that he mistakes his ground, and that this court is to be treated with decency and delicacy. The King, a young and virtuous prince, has, I am persuaded, a pleasure in reflecting on the generous benevolence of

* See these letters in the fifth volume of the *Diplomatic Correspondence.*

the action in assisting an oppressed people, and proposes it as a part of the glory of his reign. I think it right to increase this pleasure by our thankful acknowledgments, and that such an expression of gratitude is not only our duty, but our interest. A different conduct seems to me what is not only improper and unbecoming, but what may be hurtful to us. Mr. Adams, on the other hand, who, at the same time means our welfare and interest as much as I, or any man, can do, seems to think a little apparent stoutness, and a greater air of independence and boldness in our demands, will procure us more ample assistance. It is for Congress to judge and regulate their affairs accordingly.

M. de Vergennes, who appears much offended, told me, yesterday, that he would enter into no further discussions with Mr. Adams, nor answer any more of his letters. He is gone to Holland to try, as he told me, whether something might not be done to render us less dependent on France. He says, the ideas of this court and those of the people in America are so totally different, that it is impossible for any minister to please both. He ought to know America better than I do, having been there lately, and he may choose to do what he thinks will best please the people of America. But, when I consider the expressions of Congress in many of their public acts, and particularly in their letter to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, of the 24th of May last, I cannot but imagine, that he mistakes the sentiments of a few for a general opinion. It is my intention, while I stay here, to procure what advantages I can for our country, by endeavouring to please this court; and I wish I could prevent any thing being said by any of our countrymen here, that may have a contrary effect, and increase an opinion

lately showing itself in Paris, that we seek a difference, and with a view of reconciling ourselves to England. Some of them have of late been very indiscreet in their conversations.

I have received, eight months after their date, the instructions of Congress relating to a new article for guarantying the fisheries. The expected negotiations for a peace appearing of late more remote, and being too much occupied with other affairs, I have not hitherto proposed that article. But I purpose doing it next week. It appears so reasonable and equitable, that I do not foresee any difficulty. In my next, I shall give you an account of what passes on the occasion.

The silver medal ordered for the Chevalier de Fleury, has been delivered to his order here, he being gone to America. The others, for Brigadier-General Wayne and Colonel Stewart, I shall send by the next good opportunity.

The two thousand pounds I furnished to Messrs. Adams and Jay, agreeably to an order of Congress, for themselves and secretaries, being nearly expended, and no supplies to them arriving, I have thought it my duty to furnish them with further sums, hoping the supplies promised will soon arrive to reimburse me, and enable me to pay the bills drawn on Mr. Laurens in Holland, which I have engaged for, to save the pub lic credit, the holders of those bills threatening otherwise to protest them. Messrs. de Neufville of Am sterdam had accepted some of them. I have promised those gentlemen to provide for the payment before they become due, and to accept such others as shall be presented to me. I hear, and hope it is true, that the drawing of such bills is stopped, and that their number and value is not very great.

The bills drawn in favor of M. de Beaumarchais for the interest of his debt are paid.

The German Prince, who gave me a proposal some months since for furnishing troops to the Congress, has lately desired an answer. I gave no expectation, that it was likely you would agree to such a proposal; but, being pressed to send it to you, it went with some of my former letters.

M. Fouquet, who was employed by Congress to instruct people in making gunpowder, is arrived here, after a long passage; he has requested me to transmit a memorial to Congress, which I do, enclosed.

The great public event in Europe of this year is the proposal, by Russia, of an armed neutrality for protecting the liberty of commerce. The proposition is accepted now by most of the maritime powers. As it is likely to become the law of nations, *that free ships should make free goods*, I wish the Congress to consider, whether it may not be proper to give orders to their cruisers not to molest foreign ships, but conform to the spirit of that treaty of neutrality.

The English have been much elated with their success at Charleston. The late news of the junction of the French and Spanish fleets, has a little abated their spirits; and I hope that junction, and the arrival of the French troops and ships in North America, will soon produce news, that may afford us also in our turn some satisfaction.

Application has been made to me here, requesting that I would solicit Congress to permit the exchange of William John Mawhood, a lieutenant in the Seventeenth Regiment, taken prisoner at Stony Point, July 15th, 1779, and confined near Philadelphia; or, if the exchange cannot conveniently be made, that he may be permitted to return to England on his parole. By

doing this at my request, the Congress will enable me to oblige several friends of ours, who are persons of merit and distinction in this country.

Be pleased, Sir, to present my duty to Congress, and believe me to be, with great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. A similar application has been made to me in favor of Richard Croft, lieutenant in the Twentieth Regiment, a prisoner at Charlottesville. I shall be much obliged by any kindness shown to that young gentleman, and so will some friends of ours in England, who respect his father. B. F.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, 10 August, 1780.

SIR,

I received on the 12th of June, 1780, copies of your several favors of April the 29th, 1779, June the 13th, 1779, July the 9th and 16th, August and September the 16th, 1779. You will see by this what delays our correspondence sometimes meets with. I have lately received two of fresher date, viz. February the 24th, and May the 4th. I thank you much for the newspapers and journals you have from time to time sent me; I endeavour to make full returns in the same way. I could furnish a multitude of despatches with confidential informations taken out of the papers I send you, if I chose to deal in that kind of manufacture; I know the whole art of it, for I have had several volunteer correspondents in England, who have in their letters for years together communicated to me secrets of state, extracted from the newspapers, which some-

times came to hand in those papers by the same post, and sometimes by the post before. You and I send the papers themselves. Our letters may appear the leaner, but what fat they have is their own.

I wrote to you the 17th of October, and the 16th of March, and have sent duplicates, some of which I hope got to hand. You mention receiving one of September the 30th, and one of December 30th, but not that of October the 17th. The cipher you have communicated, either from some defect in your explanation, or in my comprehension, is not yet of use to me; for I cannot understand by it the little specimen you have written in it. If you have that of M. Dumas, which I left with Mr. Morris, we may correspond by it when a few sentences are required only to be written in cipher, but it is too tedious for a whole letter.

I send herewith copies of the instruments annulling the eleventh and twelfth articles of the treaty.* The treaty printed here by the court omitted them, and numbered the subsequent articles accordingly.

I write fully to the President. The frequent hinderances the Committee of Correspondence meet with in writing as a committee, which appear from the excuses in your particular letters, and the many parts of my letters, that have long been unanswered, incline me to think, that your foreign correspondence would be best managed by one secretary, who could write when he had an opportunity, without waiting for the concurrence or opinions of his brethren, who cannot always be got conveniently together. My chief letters will, therefore, for the future, be addressed to the President, till further orders.

I send you enclosed some more of Mr. Hartley's letters. He continues passionately to desire peace with

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 432.

America, but wishes we could be separated from France. With great esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Passy, 12 August, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I received yours by the Count de Vauban, and I send by him my public despatches, requesting you to sink them if necessary. I am glad you are so near ready for sailing. I return all the papers, that were enclosed in yours, and send copies of some others, which perhaps may be of use to you in your future affair with Landais.

Depend upon it, I never wrote to Mr. Gillon, that the *Bon Homme Richard* was a privateer. I could not write so, because I never had such a thought. I will, next post, send you a copy of my letter to him, by which you will see, that he has only forced that construction from a vague expression I used, merely to conceal from him (in answering his idle demand, that I would order your squadron, then on the point of sailing, to go with him to Carolina), that the expedition was at the expense and under the direction of the King, which it was not proper or necessary for him to know. The expression I used was, that *the concerned* had destined the squadron for another service. These words, *the concerned*, he and the counsellor have interpreted to mean, the owners of a privateer.

I shall send by the post some private letters for my American friends, for which I had no time by your express. If you should be still at L'Orient when they come, it is well; but do not wait a moment for them,

if you are ready to sail, and the wind serves. Adieu! I wish you a prosperous voyage, a happy sight of your friends and country, and that you may be received with all the honors you have so justly merited. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I say nothing about the prize money, having never had any thing to do with it; but I will endeavour to forward the payment to those honest fellows, who are gone to America. Pray let me know, if the despatches I formerly sent down to go with you in the *Alliance* are gone in her. There were letters containing the proceedings about Captain Landais.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Opinions in Europe concerning the American War.

Amsterdam, 17 August, 1780.

SIR,

I never was more amused with political speculations, than since my arrival in this country. Every one has his prophecy, and every prophecy is a paradox. One says, that America will give France the go-by; another, that France and Spain will abandon America; a third, that Spain will forsake France and America; a fourth, that America has the interest of all Europe against her; a fifth, that she will become the greatest manufacturing country, and thus ruin Europe; a sixth, that she will become a great and an ambitious military and naval power, and consequently terrible to Europe. In short, it seems as if they had studied for every impossibility, and agreed to foretell it, as a probable future event.

I tell the first, that if the King of France would re-

lease America from her treaty, and England would agree to our independence, on condition we would make an alliance offensive and defensive with her, America ought not to accept it, and would not; because she will in future have no security for peace, even with England, but in her treaty with France. I ask the second, whether they think the connexion of America of so little consequence to France and Spain, that they would lightly give it up? I ask the third, whether the family compact, added to the connexion with America, is a trifling consideration to Spain? To the fifth, I say, that America will not make manufactures enough for her own consumption these thousand years; to the sixth, that we love peace and hate war so much, that we can scarcely keep up an army necessary to defend ourselves against the greatest of evils, and to secure our independence, which is the greatest of blessings; and, therefore, while we have land enough to conquer from the trees, rocks, and wild beasts, we shall never go abroad to trouble other nations.

To the fourth, I say, that this paradox is like several others, viz. that Bacchus and Ceres did mischief to mankind, when they invented wine and bread; that arts, sciences, and civilization have been general calamities, &c. That, upon this supposition, all Europe ought to agree to bring away the inhabitants of America, and divide them among the nations of Europe to be maintained as paupers, leaving America to grow up again with trees and bushes, and to become again the habitations of bears and Indians, forbidding all navigation to that quarter of the globe in future. That mankind in general, however, are probably of a different opinion; believing that Columbus, as well as Bacchus and Ceres, did a service to mankind, and that Europe

and America will be rich blessings to each other; the one, supplying a surplus of manufactures, and the other, a surplus of raw materials, the productions of agriculture.

It is very plain, however, that speculation and disputation can do us little service. No facts are believed, but decisive military conquests; no arguments are seriously attended to in Europe, but force. It is to be hoped our countrymen, instead of amusing themselves any longer with delusive dreams of peace, will bend the whole force of their minds to augment their navy, to find out their own strength and resources, and to depend upon themselves. I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

FROM JAMES HUTTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Moravian Missionaries in Labrador.

Pimlico, 21 August, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Our last year's voyage to and from Labrador was a safe one. The Esquimaux remain friendly, and our people at both missions were well. Many thanks to you for the last year's passport, which I here return again, that you may be sure no ill use can be made of it by us. Our Captain Mugford is this year not in such a state of health, as to be able to perform the voyage; so we take the mate in his room. He has begged us, if possible, to get a vessel with two masts, that, in case one was damaged in hard weather, there might yet be one remaining; as, in case of the loss of the only mast, they might perish for want of succour in those unfrequented seas. We have agreed

to his request, and bought a small brig with two masts, very little bigger than the former, the description of which is as follows. The brig *Amity*, Captain James Frazer, about seventy-five tons, square-sterned, navigated by seven men. I should be much obliged to you, if you would be so kind as to send another pass according to this description, so that it may be here before the 20th of May at latest.

We are all sorry for the loss of Captain Cook. I hope the papers, that are on the way hither from Kamtschatka, will come safe.

I know not whether you could procure us a Spanish pass, or whether I should apply to M. de Sartine. I shall mention it to him, who will probably forward this. We had two old persons at our Labrador mission; one, an old Lutheran minister, a Dane, Drachardt by name, who had been a dozen years employed by the Danes in their mission in Greenland. He, in his heroic way, though he had been many years retired to Hernhuth, as soon as he heard of a mission to Labrador, dedicated his life and labors freely and eagerly to that service, and ended his days there, after a cheerful, laborious life. The other was a surgeon from Wurtemberg, very skilful and much respected in his own country; his name was Waiblinger. These two old men died about the same time, and were buried at the same time. As these were much loved by the natives, many of them, all that were near, were at the burying, and many of them lost their horror for death.

Since then, a younger man, born and bred among us, has offered his service, to succeed Waiblinger. His name is Kriegelstein, son of one of our first brethren, himself a physician. I am, &c.

JAMES HUTTON.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Relative to M. Dumas's Appointment and Services.

Passy, 2 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly your several letters of the 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th, and 21st of September. I am much pleased with the intelligence you sent me, and with the papers you have had printed.

Mr. Searle is a military officer of the Pennsylvania troops, and a member of Congress. He has some commission to execute for that province, but none that I know of from Congress. He has an open letter for you from Mr. Lovell, which he has shown me. It is full of expressions of his esteem; and I understand from Mr. Searle, that you stand exceedingly well with the Committee and with the Congress in general. I am sorry to see any marks of uneasiness and apprehension in your letters. M. Chaumont tells me, that you want some assurance of being continued. The Congress itself is changeable at the pleasure of their electors, and none of their servants have, or can have, any such assurance. If, therefore, any thing better for you, and more substantial, should offer, nobody can blame you for accepting it, however satisfied they may be with your services. But, as to the continuance of what you may enjoy, or of something as valuable in the service of the Congress, I think you may make yourself easy; for your appointment seems more likely to be increased than diminished, though it does not belong to me to promise any thing.

Mr. Laurens was to sail three days after Mr. Searle, who begins to fear he must be lost, as it was a small vessel he intended to embark in. He was bound directly to Holland.

I enclose some extracts of letters from two French officers of distinction in the army of M. de Rochambeau, which are pleasing, as they mark the good intelligence that subsists between the troops, contrary to the reports circulated by the English. They will do perhaps for your *Leyden Gazette*. With great esteem and affection, I am ever, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO JOHN JAY.

Money obtained in France to meet the Drafts of Congress.

Passy, 2 October, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I received duly and in good order the several letters you have written to me of August 16th, 19th, September 8th and 22d. The papers that accompanied them of your writing gave me the pleasure of seeing the affairs of our country in such good hands, and the prospect, from your youth, of its having the service of so able a minister for a great number of years. But the little success that has attended your late applications for money mortified me exceedingly; and the storm of bills, which I found coming upon us both, has terrified and vexed me to such a degree, that I have been deprived of sleep, and so much indisposed by continual anxiety, as to be rendered almost incapable of writing.

At length I got over a reluctance that was almost invincible, and made another application to the government here for more money. I drew up and presented a state of debts and newly expected demands, and requested its aid to extricate me. Judging from

your letters, that you were not likely to obtain any thing considerable from your court, I put down in my estimate the twenty-five thousand dollars drawn upon you, with the same sum drawn upon me, as what would probably come to me for payment. I have now the pleasure to acquaint you, that my memorial was received in the kindest and most friendly manner; and, though the court here is not without its embarrassments on account of money, I was told to make myself easy, for that I should be assisted with what was necessary.

Mr. Searle arriving about this time, and assuring me there had been a plentiful harvest, and great crops of all kinds; that the Congress had demanded of the several States contributions in produce, which would be cheerfully given; that they would therefore have plenty of provisions to dispose of; and, I being much pleased with the generous behaviour just experienced, I presented another paper, proposing, in order to ease the government here, which had been so willing to ease us, that the Congress might furnish their army in America with provisions in part of payment for the services lent us. This proposition, I was told, was well taken; but, it being considered, that, the States having the enemy in their country, and obliged to make great expenses for the present campaign, the furnishing so much provisions as the French army might need, might straiten and be inconvenient to the Congress, his Majesty did not at this time think it right to accept the offer. You will not wonder at my loving this good prince; he will win the hearts of all America.

If you are not so fortunate in Spain, continue however the even good temper you have hitherto manifested. Spain owes us nothing; therefore, whatever friendship she shows us in lending money, or furnish-

ing clothes, &c., though not equal to our wants and wishes, is however *tant de gagne.* Those, who have begun to assist us, are more likely to continue than to decline, and we are still so much obliged as their aids amount to. But I hope and am confident, that court will be wiser than to take advantage of our distress, and insist on our making sacrifices by an agreement, which the circumstances of such distress would hereafter weaken, and the very proposition can only give disgust at present. Poor as we are, yet, as I know we shall be rich, I would rather agree with them to buy at a great price the whole of their right on the Mississippi, then sell a drop of its waters. A neighbour might as well ask me to sell my street door.

I wish you could obtain an account of what they have supplied us with already in money and goods.

Mr. Grand, informing me, that one of the bills drawn on you, having been sent from hence to Madrid, was come back unaccepted, I have directed him to pay it; and he has, at my request, undertaken to write to the Marquis D'Yranda, to assist you with money to answer such bills as you are not otherwise enabled to pay, and to draw on him for the amount; which drafts I shall answer here as far as twenty-five thousand dollars. If you expect more, acquaint me. But pray write to Congress, as I do, to forbear this practice, which is so extremely hazardous, and may, some time or other, prove very mischievous to their credit and affairs. I have undertaken, too, for the bills drawn on Mr. Laurens, that have yet appeared. He was to have sailed three days after Mr. Searle, that is, the 18th of July. Mr. Searle begins to be in pain for him, having no good opinion of the little vessel he was to embark in.

We have letters from America to the 7th of Au-

gust. The spirit of our people was never higher. Vast exertions making are preparatory for some important action; great harmony and affection between the troops of the two nations; the new money in good credit, &c.

I will write to you again shortly, and to Mr. Carmichael. I shall now be able to pay up your salaries complete for the year; but, as demands unforeseen are continually coming upon me, I still retain the expectations you have given me, of being reimbursed out of the first remittances you receive.

If you find any inclination to hug me for the good news of this letter, I constitute and appoint Mrs. Jay my attorney, to receive in my behalf your embraces. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO MISS GEORGIANA SHIPLEY.

Passy, 8 October, 1780.

It is long, very long, my dear friend, since I had the great pleasure of hearing from you, and receiving any of your very pleasing letters. But it is my fault. I have long omitted my part of the correspondence. Those who love to receive letters should write letters. I wish I could safely promise an amendment of that fault. But, besides the indolence attending age, and growing upon us with it, my time is engrossed by too much business; and I have too many inducements to postpone doing, what I feel I ought to do for my own sake, and what I can never resolve to omit entirely.

Your translations from Horace, as far as I can judge of poetry and translations, are very good. That of the *Quo, quò scelesti ruitis?* is so suitable to the times, that

the conclusion, (in your version,) seems to threaten like a prophecy; and methinks there is at least some appearance of danger that it may be fulfilled. I am unhappily an enemy, yet I think there has been enough of blood spilt, and I wish what is left in the veins of that once loved people, may be spared by a peace solid and everlasting.

It is a great while since I have heard any thing of the *good bishop.* Strange, that so simple a character should sufficiently distinguish one of that sacred body! *Donnez-moi de ses nouvelles.* I have been some time flattered with the expectation of seeing the countenance of that most honored and ever beloved friend, delineated by your pencil. The portrait is said to have been long on the way, but is not yet arrived; nor can I hear where it is.

Indolent as I have confessed myself to be, I could not, you see, miss this good and safe opportunity of sending you a few lines, with my best wishes for your happiness, and that of the whole dear and amiable family in whose sweet society I have spent so many happy hours. Mr. Jones* tells me, he shall have a pleasure in being the bearer of my letter, of which I make no doubt. I learn from him, that to your drawing, and music, and painting, and poetry, and Latin, you have added a proficiency in chess; so that you are, as the French say, *remplie de talens.* May they and you fall to the lot of one, that shall duly value them, and love you as much as I do. Adieu.

B. FRANKLIN.

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* Afterwards Sir William Jones; see above, p. 366.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 9 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 29th of September and 3d of October. It is a very good addition you have made to your *Memoir* for the ministers of Russia and Sweden. I am glad to find you are again on such good terms with the ambassador, as to be invited to his comedy. I doubt not of your continuing to cultivate that good understanding. I like much your insertions in the gazettes. Such things have good effects.

Your information relative to the transactions at Petersburgh and in Denmark are very interesting, and afforded me a good deal of satisfaction, particularly the former. Mr. Searle will have the pleasure of seeing you. I recommend him warmly to your civilities. He is much your friend, and will advise Mr. Laurens to make you his secretary, which I hope you will accept. I have given it as my opinion, that Mr. Laurens can nowhere find one better qualified, or more deserving. The choice is left to that minister, and he is empowered to give a salary of five hundred pounds sterling a year. I am in pain on account of his not being yet arrived, but I hope you will see him soon. I request you would find means to introduce Mr. Searle to the Portuguese ambassador. Pray consider the enclosed papers, and, after advising with your friend, give me your opinion as to the manner of the application to the States-General, whether I should make it through their ambassador, or directly with a letter to the grand pensionary, or in what other manner. You know we wrote to him formerly, and received no answer. With great esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. You say nothing of Mr. Adams? How do you stand with him? What is he doing?

TO RICHARD PRICE.

Toleration. — Religious Tests.

Passy, 9 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Besides the pleasure of their company, I had the great satisfaction of hearing by your two valuable friends, and learning from your letter, that you enjoy a good state of health. May God continue it, as well for the good of mankind as for your comfort. I thank you much for the second edition of your excellent pamphlet. I forwarded that you sent to Mr. Dana, he being in Holland. I wish also to see the piece you have written (as Mr. Jones tells me) on Toleration. I do not expect that your new Parliament will be either wiser or honester than the last. All projects to procure an honest one, by place bills, &c., appear to me vain and impracticable. The true cure, I imagine, is to be found only in rendering all places unprofitable, and the King too poor to give bribes and pensions. Till this is done, which can only be by a revolution (and I think you have not virtue enough left to procure one), your nation will always be plundered, and obliged to pay by taxes the plunderers for plundering and ruining. Liberty and virtue therefore join in the call, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE!

I am fully of your opinion respecting religious tests; but, though the people of Massachusetts have not in their new constitution kept quite clear of them, yet, if we consider what that people were one hundred years ago, we must allow they have gone great lengths in

liberality of sentiment on religious subjects; and we may hope for greater degrees of perfection, when their constitution, some years hence, shall be revised. If Christian preachers had continued to teach as Christ and his Apostles did, without salaries, and as the Quakers now do, I imagine tests would never have existed; for I think they were invented, not so much to secure religion itself, as the emoluments of it. When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for the help of the civil power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one. But I shall be out of my depth, if I wade any deeper in theology, and I will not trouble you with politics, nor with news which are almost as uncertain; but conclude with a heartfelt wish to embrace you once more, and enjoy your sweet society in peace, among our honest, worthy, ingenious friends at the *London*. Adieu,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS RUSTON.

American Finance and Paper Money.

Passy, 9 October, 1780.

SIR,

I received and read with pleasure your thoughts on American finance, and your scheme of a bank. I communicated them to the Abbé Morellet, who is a good judge of the subject, and he has translated them into French. He thinks them generally very just, and very clearly expressed. I shall forward them to a friend in the Congress.

That body is, as you suppose, not well skilled in

financing. But their deficiency in knowledge has been amply supplied by good luck. They issued an immense quantity of paper bills, to pay, clothe, arm, and feed their troops, and fit out ships; and with this paper, without taxes for the first three years, they fought and baffled one of the most powerful nations of Europe. They hoped, notwithstanding its quantity, to have kept up the value of their paper. In this they were mistaken. It depreciated gradually. But this depreciation, though in some circumstances inconvenient, has had the general good and great effect of operating as a tax, and perhaps the most equal of all taxes, since it depreciated in the hands of the holders of money, and thereby taxed them in proportion to the sums they held and the time they held it, which generally is in proportion to men's wealth. Thus, after having done its business, the paper is reduced to the sixtieth part of its original value.

Having issued two hundred millions of dollars the Congress stopped, and supplied themselves by borrowing. These sums were borrowed at different periods during the progress of the depreciation. Those, who lent to the public, thereby fixed the value of the paper they lent, since it is to be repaid in silver according to its value at the time of the loan. The rest went on depreciating; and the depreciation is at length only stopped by the vast nominal sums called in easily by taxes, and which will be by that means destroyed. Thus, so much of the public debt has been in this manner insensibly paid, that the remainder, which you desire to know, does not exceed six millions sterling. And now they are working with new paper, expressed to be equal in value to silver, which they have made to bear interest; and I have provided such funds to pay that interest, that probably its original value will be supported.

In the mean time the vigor of their military operations is again revived, and they are now as able, with respect to money, to carry on the war, as they were at the beginning, and much more so with regard to troops, arms, and discipline. It is also an increasing nation, sixty thousand children having been born annually in the United States since the beginning of the war; while their enemies are said to be diminishing. I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN JEBB TO B. FRANKLIN.

Proposal of a Federal Union between America and England.

London, 11 October, 1780.

SIR,

The consciousness of a sincere desire to promote the interests of human kind, as far as my confined abilities and humble station will permit, induces me to give you my sentiments upon a subject, which, I have no doubt, is ever present to your thoughts. Excuse the presumption; the intention is honest; let this consideration compensate for the want of every other qualification. Independent in my principles, and unconnected with party, I speak those sentiments, which circumstances appear to me to dictate, and I speak them without reserve.

A federal union between America and England, upon the broad basis of mutual convenience, appears to me a point of so much consequence, that I cannot conceive, in the present circumstances, how either country can fully enjoy the means of happiness, which indulgent Providence has poured forth on each with so

much profusion, unless such union immediately take place.

I also am persuaded, that the present war, between this country and the house of Bourbon, is of so peculiar a kind, that no solid reason can be assigned for its continuance, a moment after America and England shall cordially agree upon a termination of their dispute.

It is obviously for the advantage of England, that America should employ her manufacturers, and that her fleets should have free access to the shores, from whence she derived those various sources of strength, which enabled her so long to reign the unrivalled mistress of the deep.

On the other hand, the rising States of America, wisely intent on such measures, as tend to increase their population, and perfect those forms of civil polity, which, at the same time that they promise internal security and happiness, will probably establish an asylum for the rest of mankind, must derive considerable advantage from the free importation of those articles, which, in their present circumstances, they cannot with convenience manufacture themselves. And why should England envy to France and Spain, nay, to all the world, that portion of trade, whatever that be, which suits the circumstances of each power; and from which all deriving the sources of rational enjoyment would, perhaps, remain in the same ratio as at present, with respect to relative strength? How strange, therefore, to persevere in an appeal to arms, when neutral interest and the ties of blood, the sameness of religion, language, and laws, so loudly call for peace! We might reasonably have hoped, that in the course of eighteen centuries the Gospel of peace might have suggested to us a more rational mode of terminating our contests.

As it never was the interest, so neither was it in fact the inclination, of the English people to break the bonds of union with their American brethren, until seduced thereto by the arts of designing men. Their motives I leave to themselves; they will be revealed in their day. Had the English people been equally represented in an annual Parliament, that Parliament, acting in strict conformity with the interests of its constituents, would have seen, that every consideration required, that the bond of union between the countries should be preserved inviolate. It would have perceived, that those restrictions, which were the offspring of the occasion, or suggested by narrow systems of policy, ought to have been removed, the moment that they occasioned the first murmur of complaint. But, unhappily for England, the love of arbitrary sway so far operated upon those, who most are exposed to its temptations, as to engage them in the desperate measure of deluding one half of the empire, in order to subjugate the rest.

The period of this delusion, however, is now rapidly advancing to its termination. Calamity has brought home the perception of the consequences, attendant upon national error, to every private breast. It has taught us wisdom, and has begun to humanize our hearts. The many are now ready to exclaim, in the expressive language of Scripture, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; *therefore is this evil come upon us.*" But although the people are disposed to accommodation, a mighty power continues to oppose itself to the general wish. And, were the aristocratic strength of our constitution to prevail in its conflict with that power, I am far from being satisfied, that a general and per-

manent pacification would be the result. The restoration of the English constitution to its primeval purity appears to be an essential preliminary to an honorable and lasting peace.

Peace and war are relations, which the inhabitants of different countries stand in to each other. In this sense the people of America are not at war with the people of England. The latter, having lost their power of self-government, are merely the instruments of administration. *The present war is a war between the people of America and the administration of this country.* Were the inhabitants of this country restored to their elective rights, and other constitutional franchises, a state of peace would immediately ensue.

Upon this idea alone can America have a proper security for the due observance of that solemn compact, which I should rejoice to see established between my native country, and her free and independent States. The supporters of the septennial bill, at the time that ruinous and unconstitutional measure took place, strongly insisted upon the advantage that would ensue from that increased confidence, which foreign nations would thenceforth repose in us, on account of the consequent stability of our public counsels. Experience has shown this measure to have been founded in policy the most unwise. Reason surely dictates, that the confidence, which nations repose in each other's public counsels, must be the greatest, when the agents speak the real sentiments of their constituent bodies.

It is also to be considered, that the changes of sentiment, in the constituent body of the nation, must unavoidably be gradual, as general interest, always slowly unveiling itself, shall direct. Whereas the agent, who has a permanent estate in his office, will vary his conduct in conformity to the quick revolutions of those

numerous temptations, to which views of private interest, and prospects of power, hourly expose him. For England therefore to be free, and to regain the confidence of nations, her Parliaments must be free and independent; and the same measure, which gives independency to the English Parliament, will, under God's providence, restore to us peace with America and with all the world.

I write not thus, induced thereto solely from an attachment to my native soil; the world is my country; and the region, which is the seat of freedom, has in my eyes charms more attractive than my native soil. I write not thus from an attachment to a favorite measure, but from a full conviction, that such a preliminary as I have mentioned, being inserted in every proposition for peace on the part of America, would lay a lasting foundation for that peace; and would be a perpetual security that the independence, which America so justly claims, and in the establishment of which every nation under Heaven is interested, would never be brought into question to the end of time.

The sum and substance of what I urge is this; that, as a more equal representation of the English people, in annual Parliaments, is a point essential to the restoration of our freedom; it is equally essential, as a foundation for a federal union with the American States.

After all, the changes in the affairs of men, whether they be revolutions in the fortunes of nations, or of individuals, are in the hands of Providence; and are directed by its resistless power to the general good. That good will finally prevail, whatever the hearts and heads of politicians may devise. The only differences will be, a difference in the time and manner in which the ends of Providence are brought to pass; and a

difference in the final fate of those, who are employed as the means of their accomplishment. The fell destroyers of their species shall see their measures, though planned with Machiavelian policy, and for a time successful, finally abortive, failing in the attainment of the evil wished for, and productive of the good they hate.

On the contrary, if virtue, honor, zeal for the interests of our country and of human kind, form the outline of the character, the agent of Heaven will be renowned in his day; and long futurity, through every successive age, shall impart increase of glory. The joys of self-complacency shall gild the evening of his days. They will also be the earnest of a happiness, which will know no bounds. I am, &c.

JOHN JEBB.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Amsterdam, 4 November, 1780.

SIR,

M. de Neufville this morning brought to me a number of bills of exchange, drawn upon Mr. Laurens, in the month of July, amounting to seven or eight hundred pounds sterling, and informed me, that your Excellency had declined becoming responsible for them, and referred him to me. I have inquired of Mr. Searle, who informs me, there are about twenty thousand pounds in such bills now on their way.

If there were only seven or eight hundred pounds, I would accept them for the honor of the United States, and run the venture of being able to pay them, by borrowing, or some way or other; but twenty thousand pounds is much beyond my private credit.

I have been and am, pursuing all those measures to which I am advised by gentlemen in whose judg-

ment I can justify placing confidence, and am not without hopes of succeeding in some measure; but I have not as yet been able to obtain any money, nor any certainty of obtaining any in future. I write this, therefore, to your Excellency, that, if you could see your way clear to become responsible for these bills for the present, I will engage to see them paid with the money I may borrow here, if I borrow enough before the term for their payment expires, or as much of them as I shall be able to borrow; but in this case, if I should not succeed in obtaining the money, your Excellency will be answerable. I should be sorry that the credit of the United States should suffer any stain, and would prevent it if I could; but at present it is not in my power.

The successes of the English at the southward, added to the many causes that obstructed our credit in this republic before, some of which it would not be prudent to explain, will render a loan here difficult; but I still hope not quite impracticable. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SIR GREY COOPER, SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Requesting Relief for Mr. Laurens, Prisoner in the Tower.

Passy, 7 November, 1780.

SIR,

I understand that Mr. Laurens, an American gentleman, for whom I have a great esteem, is a prisoner in the Tower, and that his health suffers by the closeness and rigor of his confinement. As I do not think

that your affairs receive any advantage from the harshness of this proceeding, I take the freedom of requesting your kind interposition, to obtain for him such a degree of air and liberty, on his parole or otherwise, as may be necessary for his health and comfort. The fortune of war, which is daily changing, may possibly put it in my power to do the like good office for some friend of yours, which I shall perform with much pleasure, not only for the sake of humanity, but in respect to the ashes of our former friendship. With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 26 November, 1780.

Sir,

I have received the letter, which you did me the honor to write me on the 19th instant, and with it the resolutions of Congress, ordering drafts upon you to the amount of about one million four hundred thousand livres. You can easily imagine my astonishment at your request of the necessary funds to meet these drafts, since you perfectly well know the extraordinary efforts, which I have made thus far to assist you, and to support your credit; and especially since you cannot have forgotten the demands you lately made upon me. Nevertheless, Sir, I am very desirous of assisting you out of the embarrassed situation in which these repeated drafts of Congress have placed you; and for this purpose I shall endeavour to procure for you, for the next year, the same aid that I have been able to furnish in the course of the present. I cannot but be-

lieve, Sir, that Congress will faithfully abide by what it now promises you, that in future no drafts shall be made upon you, unless the necessary funds are sent to meet them. I have the honor to be, Sir, with great sincerity, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

FROM CHARLES VERNON, LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE TOWER OF LONDON, TO SIR GREY COOPER.

Mr. Laurens's Treatment in the Tower.

Hampstead, 27 November, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am much ashamed to think, that I shall appear so dilatory in answering the favor of your letter; but the truth is, I was not in town when the messenger left it in Cork Street, and by the neglect of my servants I received it only on Sunday last. I went immediately to the Tower, to know from Mr. Laurens himself, if he had any cause of complaint, and if he had availed himself of the indulgence allowed him by the secretary of state, of walking within the Tower whenever it was agreeable to himself. His answer to me was full and frank to the questions, that he had received every reasonable indulgence since his confinement, and that, by the liberty allowed him of walking, he found his health much mended. He said, at the same time, that he had always thought himself highly honored by the distinguished place of his confinement, and regretted much it was not in his power to make known to all the world the acknowledgments he had more than once made to me upon this subject.

I beg you will do me the favor to communicate

these particulars to Lord George Germain as soon as convenient. I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

CHARLES VERNON.*

FROM SIR GREY COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 29 November, 1780.

SIR,

I have received the honor of your letter, in which you acquainted me, that you understood that the health of Mr. Laurens suffered by the closeness and rigor of his confinement in the Tower; and, after complaining of the harshness of the proceeding, you request me to endeavour to obtain for Mr. Laurens such a degree of air and liberty, as may be necessary for his health and comfort. The enclosed letter, which I received from the lieutenant-governor of the Tower, will show that I have not been inattentive to your request, and at the same time prove, that the intelligence you receive of what passes in this country, is not always to be depended on for its accuracy and correctness. I have the honor to be, &c.

GREY COOPER.

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* The tenor of the foregoing does not quadrate with the sentiments expressed by Mr. Laurens, about a year afterwards, in his petition to the House of Commons, written by himself in the Tower, with a black lead pencil, on a blank leaf of an octavo book, and privately conveyed to Mr. Burke, who presented it in that state to the House. In this petition, dated December 7th, 1781, he expressly states; "That he was captured on the American coast, and committed to the Tower on the 6th of October, 1780, being then dangerously ill; that in the mean time he has in many respects, particularly by being deprived (with very little exception) of the visits and consolations of his children and other relations and friends, suffered under a degree of rigor, almost, if not altogether, unexampled in modern British History. That, from long confinement and the want of proper exercise, and other obvious causes, his bodily health is greatly impaired, and that he is now in a languishing state," &c. See *Annual Register* for 1781, p. 322. — W. T. F.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Affairs in Holland.

Amsterdam, 30 November, 1780.

SIR,

I was duly honored with your letter of the 8th of October by Mr. Searle. I thank you, Sir, for enclosing the resolution of Congress respecting my salary and Mr. Dana's. I wish I could see a prospect of relieving you from this burden, as well as that of the bills of exchange drawn upon Mr. Laurens; but at present there is not a prospect of obtaining a shilling. What turn affairs may take, it is impossible to foresee. Some gentlemen tell me, that a few months, or indeed weeks, may produce events which will open the purses to me; but I think that our want of credit here is owing to causes, that are more permanent. I never had any just idea of this country until I came here; if, indeed, I have now. I have received money of the House of Horneca, Fizeau, and Grand, on account of Mr. F. Grand of Paris, for my subsistence; and, if you have no objection, I will continue in this way.

Mr. Searle's conversation is a cordial to me. He gives a charming, sanguine representation of our affairs, such as I am very well disposed to believe, and such as I should give myself, if interrogated, according to the best of my knowledge. But we have a hard conflict to go through yet.

The correspondence, you mention, between his Excellency the Count de Vergennes and me, I transmitted regularly to Congress in the season of it from Paris, and other copies since my arrival in Amsterdam, both without any comments.

The letter I mentioned, I believe was from your

Excellency to M. Dumas, who informs me, that there has been none to the Grand Pensionary, but the one which your Excellency wrote when I was at Passy, which I remember very well. The republic, it is said, for it is hard to come at the truth, have on the one hand acceded to the armed neutrality, and on the other have disavowed the conduct of Amsterdam. This, it is hoped, will appease all nations for the present, and it may for what I know. We shall see. I should be the less surprised at Great Britain's treating the United Provinces like an English colony, if I did not every day hear the language and sentiments of English colonists. But, if she treats all her colonies with equal tyranny, it may make them all in time equally independent.

A gentleman here has received a commission from England, to hire as many vessels as he possibly can, to carry troops to America. This I have certain information of. It is also given out, that Sir Joseph Yorke has demanded and obtained permission of the States to do it; but this, I believe, is an English report. It is also said, that the burgomasters of the city have signified abroad, that it would be disagreeable, if anybody should hire the ships. But this may be only *bruit*. It shows the English want of shipping, their intention to send troops, and their cunning to get away from this nation both their ships and seamen. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Embarrassed with the numerous Drafts from Congress.

Passy, 2 December, 1780.

SIR,

I duly received your several favors of August the 15th and September the 7th, with the resolves of Congress for drawing on me bills extraordinary, to the amount of near three hundred thousand dollars. To keep up the credit of Congress, I had already engaged for those drawn on Mr. Laurens. You cannot conceive how much these things perplex and distress me; for, the practice of this government being yearly to apportion the revenue to the several expected services, any after demands made, which the treasury is not furnished to supply, meet with great difficulty, and are very disagreeable to the ministers. To enable me to look these drafts in the face, I have agreed to a proposal contained in the enclosed letter to the President, of furnishing provisions to the King's forces in America, which proposal I hope will be approved and executed, and that the Congress will strictly comply with the assurance you have given me, not to draw on me any more without first knowing that they have funds in my hands.

I wrote to you more fully by Captain Jones. He sailed some time since, in the *Ariel*, but met with a severe storm, that entirely dismasted him, and obliged him to put back for France. He has been long refitting, but will sail again soon. Every thing goes well here. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Advisable to furnish the French Troops with Provisions in America.

Passy, 2 December, 1780.

Sir,

The many mutual advantages, that must arise from carrying into execution the proposition already communicated to Congress, of furnishing provisions to the King's forces in America, to be paid for here, have, I make no doubt, already induced them to begin that operation. But, as the proposition has lately been renewed to me, on occasion of my requesting further aids of money, to answer the unexpected drafts drawn upon me, ordered by the resolutions of May and August last, which drafts it is absolutely necessary I should find funds to pay; and as the Congress have long desired to have the means of forming funds in Europe, and an easier, cheaper, and safer method cannot possibly be contrived; and as I see, by the Journals of February, that the several States were to furnish provisions in quantities, instead of supplies in money, whereby much will be in the disposition of Congress; I flatter myself that they will not disapprove of my engaging in their behalf with the minister of the finances here, that they will cause to be delivered for the King's land and sea forces in North America such provisions, as may be wanted from time to time, to the amount of four hundred thousand dollars, the said provisions to be furnished at the current prices, for which they might be bought with silver specie.

I have constantly done my utmost to support the credit of Congress, by procuring wherewith punctually to pay all their drafts, and I have no doubt of their

care to support mine in this instance by fulfilling honorably my engagement; in which case, receipts in due form should be taken of the person to whom the provisions are delivered in the several States, and those receipts sent to me here. With great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. This value, four hundred thousand dollars, is to be considered as exclusive of any provisions already furnished; but the receipts for those should also be sent me, if not paid for there.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Captivity of Mr. Laurens. — Memorial of Sir Joseph Yorke. — Delays in sending Supplies. — Portuguese Ship captured by an American Cruiser.

Passy, 3 December, 1780.

SIR,

I duly received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me on the 12th of July past, by Mr. Searle, and have paid the bills drawn on me by order of Congress, in favor of the President and Council of Pennsylvania, for one thousand pounds sterling, which were presented by him. He is at present in Holland.

The news of Mr. Laurens having been taken must have reached you long since; he is confined in the Tower, but of late has some more liberty for taking air and exercise than first was allowed him. Certain papers found with him relating to the drafts of a treaty proposed in Holland, have been sent over to the Stadtholder, who laid them before their High Mightinesses, who communicated them to the government of

the city of Amsterdam, which justified the transaction. This has drawn from England a memorial, delivered by Sir Joseph Yorke, demanding, that the Pensionary and magistrates of that city should be punished, and declaring, that the King will resent a refusal of the States to comply with this demand. What answer will be given to this insolent memorial, we do not yet know. But I hear it has produced much displeasure in Holland; and it is thought to have occasioned a more prompt accession to the armed neutrality, which had before met with obstructions from the English party there.

We have met with a variety of unaccountable delays and difficulties in the affair of shipping the clothing and stores. The *Alliance* went away without taking her part. The *Ariel* sailed, but met a storm at sea, that dismasted her, and obliged her to return to France. She is nearly again ready to sail. Mr. Ross, with his cargo of clothes in the *Duke of Leinster*, sailed under convoy of the *Ariel*, but did not return with her, and I hope may get safe to America. The great ship we hired to come to L'Orient, and take in the rest of what we had to send, has been long unexpectedly detained at Bordeaux. I am afraid the army has suffered for want of the clothes; but it has been as impossible for me to avoid, as it was to foresee, these delays.

The late minister of the marine here, M. de Sartine, is removed, and his place supplied by M. le Marquis de Castries. But this change does not affect the general system of the court, which continues favorable to us.

I have received a copy of the resolutions of Congress of the 19th of May, and the 9th, 15th, 23d, and 30th of August, directing bills to be drawn on me for near three hundred thousand dollars. I shall accept

the bills, hoping the Congress will approve of, and readily comply with the proposition, contained in a letter to your Excellency, accompanying this, dated the 2d instant. Probably an answer may arrive here before many of those bills shall become due, as few of them are yet arrived. If that answer ratifies the agreement I have made, I shall have no difficulty in finding means to pay the rest. If not, I shall scarce be able to bear the reproaches of merchants, that I have misled them to their loss by my acceptations, which gave a promise of payment, that, not being fulfilled, has deranged their affairs; to say nothing of the power I am told the Consul's Court has here over the persons, even of ministers, in the case of bills of exchange. Let me, therefore, beg your Excellency to use your endeavours with Congress, that this matter may be immediately attended to.

Mr. Jay, no doubt, has acquainted you with his difficulties respecting the drafts upon him. I am sorry I cannot extricate him, but I hope he will still find means.

The *Mars*, an armed ship belonging to the State of Massachusetts, in her way to France, took and sent to New England a Portuguese ship bound to Cork, with salt, belonging to some merchants there. The Portuguese captain, who is brought in here, complains heavily of ill usage and plunder, besides taking his vessel; and the ambassador of that nation has communicated to me these complaints, together with all the papers proving the property of the vessel, &c., representing at the same time the good disposition of the Queen towards our States, and his wishes that nothing might lessen it, or tend to prevent or delay a complete good understanding between the two nations. I advised, that the owners should send over their claim, and empower

some person to prosecute it, in which case I did not doubt our courts would do them justice. I hope the Congress may think fit to take some notice of this affair, and not only forward a speedy decision, but give orders to our cruisers not to meddle with neutral ships for the future, it being a practice apt to produce ill blood, and contrary to the spirit of the new league, which is approved by all Europe; and the English property found in such vessels, will hardly pay the damages brought on us by the irregular proceedings of our captains in endeavouring to get at such property. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c. B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 3 December, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I have before me yours of the 9th and 16th of November, which I think are the last I received from you. With regard to the augmentation of your salaly, I would not have you place too great a dependence on it, lest a disappointment should thereby be rendered more afflicting.

If a good peace were once established, we should soon be richer, and better able to reward those that serve us. At present the expense of the war hangs heavy on the United States, and we cannot pay like old and rich kingdoms. Mr. William Lee has, as you observe, acted very imprudently in that affair; but perhaps some good may come of it.

Mr. Adams has written to me for a copy of a letter I formerly wrote to ———. If you have such a one please to give it to him. I imagine that he rather means a letter I wrote to you, in which I represent-

ed our girl as a jolly one, and who would be a good fortune in time, &c. I have no copy of that. If you still have that letter, please to give Mr. Adams a copy of that also.

I wish much to see the answer, that their High Mightinesses will give to the insolent memorial presented by Sir Joseph Yorke. If they comply with it, and punish or censure the Pensionary of Amsterdam, I shall think it a *pierre de touche* for the Stadtholder, as well as for the King of England; and that neither Mr. Adams will be safe at Amsterdam, nor our ships in any port of Holland. Let me therefore know, by the earliest means, the turn this affair is like to take, that I may advertise our government and our merchants. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Instructions for procuring a further Loan in France.

Philadelphia, 1 January, 1781.

SIR,

You will receive herewith enclosed a letter addressed to his Most Christian Majesty, also a copy of the same for your information, together with instructions of the 29th of November and 27th of December for your government on the important subject contained in the letter to the King of France; likewise a copy of the instructions given to Colonel Laurens on the same subject, and a copy of the resolution of Congress respecting the declaration of the Empress of Russia.*

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* See the above papers in *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. pp 176, 185; Vol IX. p. 199.—*Journals of Congress, October 5th*, 1780.

By these despatches you will be informed, that Colonel Laurens is coming to France, charged with a special commission, with your advice and influence, to solicit the aids in money and other articles referred to in his instructions. It is probable he will sail from America in some fifteen or twenty days from this time. You will observe, nevertheless, that it is the pleasure and expectation of Congress, that you should not delay any measures for obtaining the aids requested, nor wait for the arrival of Mr. Laurens.

An estimate of the aids requested, except the twenty-five millions of livres, you have already received the last year; and no time ought to be lost in forwarding such aids as may be obtained.

Your wisdom, prudence, and zeal for the prosperity of the United States, render it unnecessary for me to add any persuasives on this important subject. I have the honor to be, &c.

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON,
President of Congress.

FROM M. DE MARBOIS TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Exertions of Dr. Franklin's Daughter in procuring Supplies of Clothing for the American Soldiers.

Translation.

Philadelphia, 4 January, 1781.

SIR,

I have desired Colonel Laurens to recall me particularly to your recollection, and I have no doubt he will faithfully do so. Still I cannot help wishing, for my own satisfaction, to say a few words to you of

* M. de Marbois was Secretary to the French Legation in the United States.

persons here, whom I know to be very dear to you. Mr. and Mrs. Bache and their children are in excellent health. Mrs. Bache does not yet give up the hope of going to see you in France, and I urge her much to make the voyage.

If there are in Europe any women, who need a model of attachment to domestic duties, and love for their country, Mrs. Bache may be pointed out to them as such. She passed a part of the last year in exertions to rouse the zeal of the Pennsylvania ladies; and she made on this occasion such a happy use of the eloquence, which you know she possesses, that a large part of the American army was provided with shirts, bought with their money, or made by their hands. In her applications for this purpose, she showed the most indefatigable zeal, and the most unwearied perseverance, and a courage in asking, which surpassed even the obstinate reluctance of the Quakers in refusing. Rivington tried to turn her zeal into ridicule. Her patriotism, he called superstition and foolish fanaticism; he pretended, that her officiousness went beyond all bounds. In a word, she could not have been praised more skilfully.*

This honest Rivington made a fairer hit, in publishing lately a number of intercepted letters. You will see them in the English papers; therefore I will not anticipate the reflections they will lead you to make. Congress was wise enough to take no notice of them. The English may find there new proofs of the wants of the allies, but they can see neither discouragement, nor despondency, nor disaffection, nor the least trace of coldness between these allies, nor the shadow of

* See two letters from General Washington to Mrs. Bache and other ladies on this subject, in *Washington's Writings*, Vol. VII. pp. 376, 408,

a desire to draw nearer to themselves; and that is certainly what they would most desire to find. I am, with great respect, Sir, &c.

DE MARBOIS.

P. S. The Chevalier de la Luzerne begs to present you his respectful compliments. Have the goodness also to remember us to your grandson.

TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE.*

Passy, 18 January, 1781.

SIR,

I received your obliging letter of the 16th past, enclosing one from my dear friend, Dr. Fothergill. I was happy to hear from him, that he was quite free of the disorder that had like to have removed him last summer. But I had soon after a letter from another friend, acquainting me, that he was again dangerously ill of the same malady; and the newspapers have since announced his death. I condole with you most sincerely on this occasion. I think a worthier man never lived. For, besides his constant readiness to serve his friends, he was always studying and projecting something for the good of his country and of mankind in general, and putting others, who had it in their power, on executing what was out of his own reach; but whatever was within it he took care to do himself; and his incredible industry and unwearied activity enabled him to do much more than can now be ever known, his modesty being equal to his other virtues.

I shall take care to forward his letter to Mr. Pem-

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* At this time a student of medicine at Leyden.

berton. Enclosed is one I have just received under cover from that gentleman. You will take care to convey it by some safe opportunity to London.

With hearty wishes for your prosperity and success in your profession, and that you may be a good copy of your deceased relation, I am your friend and humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 18 January, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last I have been favored by yours of December 1st, 7th, 14th, 21st, 25th, and January 1st, by which you have kept me constantly well informed of the state of affairs. Accept my thanks. You may depend on my mentioning your diligence and services to Congress in the manner they merit.

Though I have been some weeks free from the gout, my feet are still tender, and my knees feeble; so that going up and down stairs is exceedingly difficult and inconvenient to me. This has prevented my going much out, so that I had not the honor I wished, of waiting on the ambassador when he was here, and paying the respects I owe him; and he returned suddenly.

I much approve of the step you took the 16th of December, before Messrs. Adams and Searle. I received a copy. I wondered to find that you had not in Holland, on the 28th, received the declaration of war, but have since learnt how it happened. Surely there never was a more unjust war; it is manifestly such from their own manifesto. The spirit of rapine dictated it; and, in my opinion, every man in England who fits out a privateer to take advantage of it, has

the same spirit, and would rob on the highway in his own country, if he was not restrained by fear of the gallows. They have qualified poor Captain Jones with the title of pirate, who was only at war with England; but, if it be a good definition of a pirate, that he is *hostis humani generis*, they are much more pirates than he, having already made great progress towards being at war with all the world. If God governs, as I firmly believe, it is impossible such wickedness should long prosper.

You will receive this by Mr. Deane, who has a great regard for you, and whom I recommend to your civilities, though the gentleman at present with you may be prejudiced against him; prejudices that time will cause to vanish, by showing they were groundless. I enclose a packet for Leyden, which I shall be glad to hear is delivered safe, and therefore desire your care of it. I am, &c. B. Franklin.

P. S. *January 20th.* — Since writing the above, I have received yours of the 12th instant. I am glad to hear that the affairs of the republic have taken so good a turn in Russia. With this you will receive three letters for Mr. Laurens, which I request you would forward to Mr. Adams. Be of good courage, and keep up your spirits. Your last letter has a melancholy turn. Do you take sufficient bodily exercise? Walking is an excellent thing for those whose employment is chiefly sedentary.

TO DAVID BARCLAY.

Death of Dr. Fothergill.

Passy, 12 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I condole with you most sincerely on the loss of our dear friend, Dr. Fothergill. I hope that some one, that knew him well, will do justice to his memory, by an account of his life and character. He was a great doer of good. How much might have been done, and how much mischief prevented, if his, your, and my joint endeavours, in a certain melancholy affair, had been attended to.* With great respect and esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM.

Passport for Provisions and Clothing sent to the West Indies.

Passy, 12 February, 1781.

SIR,

I have received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 12th ultimo. Enclosed with this,

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* The allusion here is to the negotiation, which was attempted between Dr. Franklin, Dr. Fothergill, Mr. Barclay, and Lord Howe, a short time before Dr. Franklin left England. See Vol. V. p. 1. In a letter to Dr. Lettsom, respecting Dr. Fothergill, dated March 17th, 1783, he wrote as follows. "Our late excellent friend was always proposing something for the good of mankind. You will find instances of this kind in one of his letters, which I enclose, the only one I can at present lay my hand on. I have some very valuable ones in America, if they are not lost in the late confusions. Just before I left England, he, in conjunction with Mr. Barclay and myself, labored hard to prevent the coming war; but our endeavours were fruitless This transaction is alluded to in the first page. If we may estimate the goodness of a man by his disposition to do good, and his constant endeavours and success in doing it, I can hardly conceive that a better man has ever existed."—LETTSOM'S *Life of Dr. Fothergill*, p. 177.

I send you the passport desired, which I hope will be respected and effectual. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

PASSPORT.

"To all Captains and Commanders of Vessels of War belonging to the Thirteen United States of America, or either of them, or to any of the Citizens of the said States, or to any of the Allies thereof.

"GENTLEMEN,

"It being authentically represented to me, that the worthy citizens of Dublin, touched with the general calamities with which Divine Providence has thought fit lately to visit the West India Islands, have charitably resolved to contribute to their relief, by sending them some provisions and clothing; and, as the principles of common humanity require of us to assist our fellow creatures, though enemies, when distressed by the hand of God, and by no means to impede the benevolence of those, who commiserate their distresses, and would alleviate them; I do hereby earnestly recommend it to you, that, if the ship or vessel, in which the said charitable supplies will be sent to the said Islands, should by the fortune of war fall into any of your hands, and it shall appear to you by her authentic papers, that the cargo is *bonâ fide* composed of such beneficent donations only, and not of merchandise, intended to be sold for the profit of the shippers, you would kindly and generously permit the said vessel to pass to the place of her destination; in doing of which you will not only have the present and lasting satisfaction of having gratified your own humane and pious feelings as men and as Christians, but will undoubtedly recommend yourselves to the

favor of God, of the Congress, of your employers, and of your country.

"Wishing you success in your cruises, I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN,
"*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States at the Court of France.*"

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Transmitting Letters of Congress to the King. — Instructions of Congress. — Critical Situation of America. — Necessity of immediate Aid.

Passy, 13 February, 1781.

SIR,

I have just received from Congress their letter for the King, which I have the honor of putting herewith into the hands of your Excellency. I am charged, at the same time, to "represent, in the strongest terms, the unalterable resolution of the United States to maintain their liberties and independence; and inviolably to adhere to the alliance at every hazard, and in every event; and that the misfortunes of the last campaign, instead of repressing, have redoubled their ardor; that Congress are resolved to employ every resource in their power to expel the enemy from every part of the United States, by the most vigorous and decisive coöperation with marine and other forces of their illustrious ally; that they have accordingly called on the several States for a powerful army and ample supplies of provisions; and that the States are disposed effectually to comply with their requisitions. That if, in aid of their own exertions, the court of France can be prevailed on to assume a naval su-

periority in the American seas, to furnish the arms, ammunition, and clothing, specified in the estimate heretofore transmitted, and to assist with the loan mentioned in the letter, they flatter themselves, that, under the divine blessing, the war must speedily be terminated, with glory and advantage to both nations."

By several letters to me from intelligent persons it appears, that the great and expensive exertions of the last year, by which a force was assembled capable of facing the enemy, and which accordingly drew towards New York, and lay long near that city, was rendered ineffectual by the superiority of the enemy at sea; and that their successes in Carolina had been chiefly owing to that superiority, and to the want of the necessary means for furnishing, marching, and paying the expense of troops sufficient to defend that province. The Marquis de Lafayette writes to me, that it is impossible to conceive, without seeing it, the distress which the troops have suffered for want of clothing; and the following is a paragraph of a letter from General Washington, which I ought not to keep back from your Excellency, viz. "I doubt not that you are so fully informed by Congress of our political and military state, that it would be superfluous to trouble you with any thing relative to either. If I were to speak on topics of the kind, it would be to show that our present situation makes one of two things essential to us; a peace, or the most vigorous aid of our allies, particularly in the article of *money*. Of their disposition to serve us, we cannot doubt; their generosity will do every thing which their means will permit." They had in America great expectations, I know not on what foundation, that a considerable supply of money would be obtained from Spain; but that expectation has failed, and the force of that nation in those seas

has been employed to reduce small forts in Florida, without rendering any direct assistance to the United States; and indeed the long delay of that court, in acceding to the treaty of commerce, begins to have the appearance of its not inclining to have any connexion with us; so that, for effectual friendship, and for the aid so necessary in the present conjuncture, we can rely on France alone, and in the continuance of the King's goodness towards us.

I am grown old. I feel myself much enfeebled by my late long illness, and it is probable I shall not long have any more concern in these affairs. I therefore take this occasion to express my opinion to your Excellency, that the present conjuncture is critical; that there is some danger lest the Congress should lose its influence over the people, if it is found unable to procure the aids that are wanted; and that the whole system of the new government in America may thereby be shaken; that, if the English are suffered once to recover that country, such an opportunity of effectual separation as the present may not occur again in the course of ages; and that the possession of those fertile and extensive regions, and that vast seacoast, will afford them so broad a basis for future greatness, by the rapid growth of their commerce, and breed of seamen and soldiers, as will enable them to become the *terror of Europe*, and to exercise with impunity that insolence, which is so natural to their nation, and which will increase enormously with the increase of their power. I am, with great respect, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 6 March, 1781.

SIR,

By perusing the enclosed instructions to Colonel Laurens and myself, your Excellency will see the necessity I am under of being importunate for an answer to the application lately made for aids of stores and money.* As vessels are about to depart for America, it is of the utmost importance, that the Congress should receive advice by some of them, of what may or may not be expected. I therefore earnestly entreat your Excellency to communicate to me, as soon as possible, the necessary information. With sincere esteem, I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO FELIX NOGARET.

French Translation of a Latin Verse complimentary to Dr. Franklin.

Passy, 8 March, 1781.

SIR,

I received the letter you have done me the honor of writing to me the 2d instant, wherein, after overwhelming me with a flood of compliments, which I can never hope to merit, you request my opinion of your translation of a Latin verse, that has been applied to me.† If I were, which I really am not, sufficiently

* For a history of Colonel John Laurens's mission to France, see *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IX. pp. 195–249.

† Alluding to the Latin line, which was first applied to Dr. Franklin by M. Turgot, and of which he is said to have been the author.

"Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

The original conception was probably suggested by a line in the

skilled in your excellent language, to be a proper judge of its poesy, the supposition of my being the subject, must restrain me from giving any opinion on that line, except that it ascribes too much to me, especially in what relates to the tyrant; the revolution having been the work of many able and brave men, wherein it is sufficient honor for me if I am allowed a small share.

I am much obliged by the favorable sentiments you are pleased to entertain of me; and I shall be glad to see your remarks on Gay's *Fan*, as well as your own poem on the same subject. With regard, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Astronomicon of Manilius, (Lib. I. 104,) where the poet is speaking of Epicurus.

"Eripuit Jovi fulmen, viresque tonandi."

M. Nogaret's translation was accompanied by critical remarks. The following is an extract from his letter.

"Les Français, votre Excellence le sçait, ont fait tous leurs efforts pour traduire ce vers Latin où l'on vous rend justice en si peu de mots. Ils ont paru aussi jaloux de transporter cet éloge dans leur langue, qu'ils le sont de vous posséder. Cependant personne n'a réussi, et je crois qu'on ne réussira pas. Car de ces deux vers, insérés comme des meilleurs dans *L'Almanach des Muses* de l'année dernière;

'Cet homme que tu vois, sublime en tous les tems,
Dérobe aux dieux la foudre et le sceptre aux tyrans;'

le premier est de trop. Le second vers est passable. Il serait bon, si, au lieu de *dérobe*, il y avait *arrache*. Mais ce seul vers ne suffit pas. Le sens n'est pas plein. Il faudrait un nom ou un pronom; et ni l'un ni l'autre n'y peut entrer; autrement le vers n'y serait plus. Aurait-on à peu près l'équivalent du Latin, si l'on disait,

'On l'a vu désarmer les tyrans et les dieux'?

"Puisque le laconisme est nécéssaire, voilà ce que je proposerais au graveur. Les images du *sceptre* et de la *foudre* disparaissent en apparence dans cette traduction; mais je pense qu'elles n'échappent point aux yeux de la reflexion. *Désarmer* Jupiter, c'est lui ôter sa foudre. *Cœlo* dit beaucoup dans le Latin. *Cieux* ne le rendrait point. J'y supplée par des êtres. Je ne dis pas que la physique y gagne, mais la poésie n'y perd pas."

In reply to Dr. Franklin's answer, some time afterwards, M. Nogaret

TO M. DE RAYNEVAL, SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

Supplies wanted in America.

Passy, 11 March, 1781.

SIR,

I have examined the list of supplies wanted in America, which I received yesterday from you, in order to mark, as desired, what may be most necessary to forward thither. As that list is of old date, and I do not know what part of it may have been already procured by other channels, and I understand by my letters that a new list has been made out, which is given to Colonel Laurens, and, though mentioned to be sent to me also, is not yet come to my hands, I have thought it may be well for the present to order the making of a quantity of soldiers' and officers' clothing, equal to one third part of what has been demanded from

---

said; "Paris est content de la traduction de votre *Eripuit*, et votre portrait fait, come je l'avais prévu, la fortune du graveur."

The following is D'Alembert's translation.

"Tu vois le sage courageux,
Dont l'heureux et mâle génie
Arracha le tonnerre aux dieux,
Et le sceptre à la tyrannie."

Among Dr. Franklin's papers I find the following paraphrastic version from an unknown hand.

"Franklin sut arrêter la foudre dans les airs,
Et c'est le moindre bien qu'il fit à sa patrie;
Au milieu de climats divers,
Où dominait la tyrannie,
Il fit régner les arts, les mœurs, et le génie;
Et voilà le héros que j'offre à l'univers."

It was likewise translated into English by Mr. Elphinston.

"He snatched the bolt from Heaven's avenging hand,
Disarmed and drove the tyrant from the land."

page 31 to page 42 inclusive; and to collect and get ready also one third of the other articles mentioned in the said pages, which I have marked with a red line in the margin, the whole to be sent by the first good opportunity.

I think it would be well also to send five thousand more good fusils, with fifty tons of lead, and two hundred thousand flints for fusils. If these could go with the fleet, it would be of great service. More powder is not necessary to be sent at present, as there goes in the *Marquis de Lafayette* the remainder of the two thousand barrels granted last year, and also two hundred tons of saltpetre, which they will make into powder. For the other articles that may be wanted, as Colonel Laurens will come fully instructed, as well by the list given to him, as from his own observation and experience in the army, and from the information he will receive from General Washington, with whom and the Marquis de Lafayette he was to consult before his departure, I conceive it will be best to wait a little for his arrival.

I return the lists, and, having by some unaccountable accident mislaid and lost the paper you gave me, containing what Count de Vergennes said to me yesterday, I must beg the favor of you to repeat it, and send it by the bearer. I am ashamed to give you this trouble, but I wish to be exact in what I am writing of it to Congress. With the greatest esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I. p. 367.

A FRAGMENT OF POLYBIUS.*

From his Treatise on the Athenian Government.

ATHENS had long been an object of universal admiration, and consequently of envy. Her navy was invincible, her commerce extensive; Europe and Asia supplied her with wealth; of her citizens, all were intrepid, many virtuous; but some too much infected with principles unfavorable to freedom. Hence an oligarchy was, in great measure, established; crooked counsels were thought supreme wisdom; and the Athenians, having lost their true relish for their own freedom, began to attack that of their colonies, and of the States which they had before protected. Their arrogant claims of unlimited dominion had compelled the Chians, Coans, Rhodians, Lesbians, to join with [illegible] small communities in the *social war*, which they began with inconceivable ardor, and continued with industry surpassing all example, and almost surpassing belief.

They were openly assisted by Mausolus, king of Caria, to whose metropolis the united Islands had sent a philosopher, named Eleutherion, eminent for the deepest knowledge of nature, the most solid judgment, most approved virtue, and most ardent zeal for the cause of general liberty. The war had been supported for three years with infinite exertions of valor on both sides, with deliberate firmness on the part of the allies, and with unabated vio-

* It will be immediately perceived, on the perusal of this pretended *Fragment*, that it was an ingenious device on the part of Mr. Jones to bring to Dr. Franklin's notice such terms of conciliation, as might probably at this time have been obtained from the British government. The idea of a direct acknowledgment of independence is carefully excluded. By substituting France for *Caria*, England for *Athens*, the United States for the *Islands*, Dr. Franklin for *Eleutherion*, and Mr. Jones for *an Athenian*, the interpretation will be obvious.

lence on the part of the Athenians; who had, nevertheless, despatched commissioners to Rhodes, with intent to propose terms of accommodation; but the States (perhaps too pertinaciously) refused to hear any proposal whatever, without a previous recognition of their total independence by the magistrates and the people of Athens.

It was not long after this, that an Athenian, who had been a pupil of Isæus together with Demosthenes, and begun to be known in his country as a pleader of causes, was led by some affairs of his clients to the capital of Caria. He was a man unauthorized, unemployed, unconnected; independent in his circumstances, as much as in his principles; admitting no governor, under Providence, but the laws; and no laws but those, which justice and virtue had dictated, which wisdom approved, which his country had freely enacted. He had been known at Athens to the sage Eleutherion; and, their acquaintance being renewed, he sometimes took occasion in their conversations to lament the increasing calamities of war, and to express his eager desire of making a general peace on such terms as *would produce the greatest good from the greatest evil;* for "this," said he, "would be a work not unworthy of the divine attributes; and, if mortals could effect it, they would act like those beneficent beings, whom Socrates believed to be the constant friends and attendants of our species." He added,

"As to the united nations, I applaud, admire, and almost envy them; I am even tempted to wish that I had been born a Chian or a Rhodian; but let them be satisfied with the prize of virtue, which they have already obtained. I will yield to none of your countrymen, my friend, in my love of *liberty;* but she seems more lovely to my eyes, when she comes hand-in-hand with *peace.* From that union we can expect nothing but the highest happiness of which our nature is capable; and it is a union, which nothing now obstructs but — a mere word. Let the confederates be contented with the *substance* of that *independence,* which they have asserted, and the *word* will necessarily follow. Let them not hurt the natural, and, perhaps, not reprehensible, pride of Athens, nor demand any concession that may sink in the eyes of Greece a nation, to whom they are and must be united in language, in blood, in manners, in interest, in principles. Glory is to a nation what reputation is to an individual; it is not an empty sound, but important and essential. It will be glorious in Athens to acknowledge her error in attempting to reduce the Islands; but an ac-

knowledgment of her inability to reduce them (if she *be* unable) will be too public a confession of weakness, and her rank among the states of Greece will instantly be lowered.

"But, whatever I might advise, if my advice had any chance of being taken, this *I know*, and positively pronounce, that, while Athens is Athens, her proud but brave citizens will never *expressly* recognise the independence of the Islands; their resources are no doubt exhaustible, but will not be exhausted in the lives of us and of our children. In this resolution all parties agree. I, who am of no party, dissent from them; but what is a single voice in so vast a multitude? Yet the independence of the United States was tacitly acknowledged by the very offer of terms, and it would result in silence from the natural operation of the treaty. An *express* acknowledgment of it is merely *formal* with respect to the allies; but the prejudices of mankind have made it *substantial* with respect to Athens.

"Let this obstacle be removed. It is slight, but fatal; and, while it lasts, thousands and tens of thousands will perish. In war much will always depend upon blind chance, and a storm or sudden fall of snow *may* frustrate all your efforts for liberty; but let commissioners from both sides meet, and the Islanders, by not insisting on a *preliminary* recognition of independence, will *ultimately* establish it for ever.

"But *independence* is not *disunion*. Chios, Cos, Lesbos, Rhodes, are *united*, but *independent* on each other; they are connected by a common tie, but have different forms and different constitutions. They are gems of various colors and various properties strung in one bracelet. Such a *union* can only be made between states, which, how widely soever they differ in form, agree in one common property, *freedom*. Republics may form *alliances*, but not a *federal union*, with arbitrary monarchies. Were Athens governed by the *will* of a monarch, she could never be coördinate with the free Islands; for such a union would not be dissimilarity, but dissonance. But she is and shall be ruled by *laws* alone, that is, by the *will of the people*, which is the *only law*. Her Archon, even when he was *perpetual*, had no essential properties of monarchy. The constitution of Athens, if we must define it, was then *a republic with a perpetual administration of its laws*. Between Athens, therefore, and the freest states in the world, a *union* may naturally be formed.

"There is a *natural* union between her and the Islands, which the gods have made, and which the powers of hell cannot dissolve.

Men, speaking the same idiom, educated in the same manner, perhaps in the same place, professing the same principles, sprung from the same ancestors in no very remote degree, and related to each other in a thousand modes of consanguinity, affinity, and friendship, such men, whatever they may say through a temporary resentment, can never in their hearts consider one another as *aliens*.

"Let them meet then with fraternal and pacific dispositions, and let this be the *general* groundwork and plan of the treaty.

"I. The Carians shall be included in the pacification, and have such advantages as will induce them to consent to the treaty, rather than continue a hazardous war.

"II. The archon, senate, and magistrates of Athens shall make a complete *recognition of rights* of all the Athenian citizens of all orders whatever, and all former laws for that purpose shall be combined in one. There shall not be one *slave* in Attica.

"*Note.* By making this a *preliminary*, the Islanders will show their affection for the people of Athens; their friendship will be cemented and fixed on a solid basis; and *the greatest good will be extracted*, as I at first proposed, *from the greatest evil.*

"III. There shall be a perfect *coördination* between Athens and the thirteen united Islands, they considering her not as a *parent*, whom they must *obey*, but as an elder *sister*, whom they cannot help *loving*, and to whom they shall give *preëminence of honor and coequality of power.*

"IV. The new constitutions of the confederate Islands shall remain.

"V. On every occasion, requiring *acts* for the *general* good, there shall be an assembly of deputies from the senate of Athens, and the congress of the Islands, who shall fairly adjust the whole business, and settle the ratio of the contributions on both sides. This committee shall consist of fifty Islanders and fifty Athenians, or of a smaller number chosen by them.

"VI. If it be thought necessary and found convenient, a proportionable number of Athenian citizens shall have seats, and power of debating and voting on questions of *common* concern, in the great assembly of the Islands, and a proportionable number of Islanders shall sit with the like power in the assembly at Athens.

"*Note.* This *reciprocal representation* will cement the union.

"VII. There shall be no obligation to make war but for the *common* interest.

"VIII. Commerce shall flow in a free course for the *general* advantage of the united powers.

"IX. A universal, unlimited *amnesty* shall be proclaimed in every part of Greece and Asia.

"This," said the Athenian, "is the rough sketch of a treaty founded on virtue and liberty. The idea of it still fills and expands my soul; and, *if* it cannot be realized, I shall not think it less glorious, but shall only grieve more and more at the perverseness of mankind. May the Eternal Being, whom the wise and the virtuous adore, and whose attribute it is to convert into good that evil which his unsearchable wisdom permits, inspire all ranks of men to promote either this or a similar plan! If this be impracticable, Oh miserable human nature! But I am fully confident that, if more at large happiness of all."——

No more is extant of this interesting piece, upon which the commentary of the sage Polybius would have been practically valuable in these times.

No. II. p. 472.

MEMOIR OF SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE;

OR

A PROJECT OF LORD ROCHFORD TO PREVENT THE WAR.*

Translation.

Before the declaration of France in favor of America, Lord Rochford, formerly ambassador in Spain and in France, formed a project to prevent the war. It was, that England should propose a great treaty of confederation between France, Spain, Portugal, and England, the objects of which should be the three following.

* Sir John Dalrymple passed from Lisbon through Spain to Paris. While he was in Madrid, he called on Count de Florida Blanca, the Spanish minister of Foreign Affairs, and, after some general conversation about the war, the minister requested him to state in writing what he had to say on that subject. He accordingly sent this Memoir, which he called *A Historical Anecdote*. It had been drawn up some time previously, and it purports to have been the work of Lord Rochford, but its precise date is not known. Count de Florida Blanca gave a copy of the original to Mr. Jay, who was then the American minister at the court of Spain; and Mr. Carmichael sent a transcript of the same to Dr. Franklin. See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VII. p. 266.

The first, a mutual guarantee between these four powers of their possessions in America and the two Indies, with a proviso, that a war in Europe should never be a war in those remote regions on any pretext whatever; fixing also the number of troops and vessels to be furnished by the contracting powers against the power, that should contravene the peace, in those distant parts. The second object was, to grant a participation in the commerce of America to France, Spain, and Portugal, as far as such participation might not be incompatible with the common interests, and without the rivalship of English America in England. The third object was, the adjustment of the contested privileges of the Americans, upon principles just and honorable for them. Lord Rochford was at that time Secretary of State. He told me, that the first person, to whom he had communicated this project, was the late Prince of Mazarano, ambassador of Spain, and that, though old and indisposed, he arose and embraced him, and said, "Ah! my Lord, what divinity has inspired you?" Lord Rochford also communicated it to a friend of his, who was then, and still continues, one of the ministers of the King of England, who gave it his approbation; but Lord Rochford soon after quitted the ministry and retired to the country, by which accident the project failed of being presented to the cabinet of the King.

I have given a relation of this anecdote, because I am one of the four or five persons who alone know the truth of it, and because I am of opinion, that it is not yet too late to revive a project, which will save a million of Christians from becoming widows and orphans. As to the first object of such a confederacy, Lord Rochford did not doubt of the proposition's being accepted by all the powers, because it was the interest of all to accept it. The losses of France in the two Indies the last war, and their misfortunes in the East Indies in the present one, where, in six weeks, they have lost all they possessed; the losses of the Spaniards in the last war in the two Indies, and even the stroke the other day in the Bay of Honduras, by a young captain with a handful of soldiers; the facility with which Portugal lost the Island of St. Catharine in the Brazils, and the misfortunes of the English armies the three last years in America, all prove, that France, Spain, Portugal, and England, have their tender parts in America and the two Indies, and, of consequence, that they have all an interest in a mutual guarantee of their possessions in those three parts of the world.

As to the second object of the confederacy, I am sensible, that

the idea of the other three powers participating in the commerce of America, under the limitation of its not being incompatible with the common interests of English America and England, is an idea somewhat vague, and subject to disputes. But, fortunately for humanity, there are five persons in those five countries, of characters which render them proper to draw the outlines of some determinate regulations, which will admit of no disputes, and may enrich France, Spain, and Portugal, without impoverishing England and her colonies. In America there is Doctor Franklin, perhaps the first genius of the age, who is well acquainted with the commecial connexions between America and England; France has her Comptroller-General, who, from his youth, has been brought up in the practice of commerce; in Spain, we find M. Campomanes, who has employed the maturity of his life in studies, that give him a superiority in discussions of this kind; Portugal will be assisted by the counsels of the Duke of Braganza, who has gathered knowledge in almost every field, in courts, in libraries, and even on the exchanges of the merchants of Europe; and, as for England, she has a minister, who, thoroughly versed in the true interests of commerce, will not refuse to America what he has just granted to Ireland.

As to the third object of the confederation, England, who much boasts of her own *Magna Charta*, will make no difficulty in granting a *magna charta* to the liberties of America. Perhaps the best means to expedite this measure would be to give a *carte blanche* to Dr. Franklin. A generous confidence is the surest means to secure a generous man. Spain has, too, very solid interests in the success of such a confederacy, and against the independence of America. The first is, that if English America becomes independent, Spanish America will be overrun with the contraband of the Americans thus independent of England. 1. England is bound by treaties with Spain not to carry on the contraband trade. 2. She is restrained by the fear of this contraband's drawing a war upon her in Europe, which was the consequence of it in the times of Sir Robert Walpole. 3. The dearness of English and European commodities sets natural bounds to the quantity of this contraband.

But, when the Americans are independent, they will say, first, they are not bound by the treaties of the English; secondly, they will not be restrained by fear, being so far from Spain; and, having defended themselves against eighty thousand English soldiers and marines, they would but little dread the forces of Spain; and,

thirdly, the low price of American commodities will cover the Spanish colonies with contraband. Indeed, necessity itself will oblige the Americans either to carry on this contraband, or to make war on Spanish and Portuguese America and their Islands. They have neither gold nor silver among themselves, and without these precious metals, they can neither cultivate their lands nor carry on commerce. They will only have four sources from whence to draw them; first, their commerce with Europe, secondly, pensions from France and Spain; thirdly, a contraband trade with the provinces of Spain and Portugal in the new world; and, fourthly, a war in these provinces.

While the Americans continue in a state, which the English call rebellion, their commerce with Europe will be interrupted by English cruisers. Thus they will draw but a small quantity of these precious metals from this first source. The pensions of France and Spain will be much too inconsiderable to support the agriculture and manufactures of so extensive a country. Their only remaining source, then, for these metals will be in the contraband, or wars with the Spanish and Portuguese provinces. To prevent this contraband, the treaty of confederation might make provision against the contraband both of the English and Americans. It is a delicate point for an Englishman to suggest the means; but, were the two nations sincerely disposed for peace, I could in a quarter of an hour suggest the infallible means.

Spain has another interest, perhaps still greater, against the independence of the Americans, and, consequently, in favor of the treaty in question. The Americans, who will be able to fly with their sails wherever they please, will make establishments in New Zealand, the Islands of Otaheite, or some other islands in the South Sea, from whence they will torment the Spaniards in that sea, and even the English, the French, the Portuguese, and the Dutch, in the East India seas. Being independent, no treaty will prevent their making such establishments. They may make them consistent with the laws of nations. Captain Cook, in his last printed Voyages says, there are forty-seven thousand seafaring people in the Island of Otaheite alone; and Captain Wallis, who discovered those Islands, told me, at Lisbon, a few days ago, that the inhabitants of Otaheite went to the mast-head of English ships, and ran on the yard-arms as well in three days' time as the English mariners, and gave me two reasons for it. The first was, that, living on fish, they are all seafaring people; and the second, that those who wear no shoes are always the most dexterous in mount-

ing the upper parts of a ship. Captain Cook, also, in the same Voyage, gives a description of a port and city in New Zealand, which might in a few weeks be made impregnable; and one needs only to look at the shape of the Islands in the South Seas, in the maps we have of them, to be convinced that they have no small number of these impregnable ports.

I show myself as much a friend to Spain, to France, to Portugal, and Holland, as to England, in disclosing the following idea, which may have escaped others. Heretofore it was impossible to go to the South Seas with any safety, but in the months of December and January, and by the dreadful latitudes round Cape Horn. But the late discoveries of Captain Cook and other Englishmen have demonstrated the practicability of going thither in every month of the year, round the Cape of Good Hope, and the fine latitude of New Zealand, and in almost the same time; the one being a passage of four and the other of five months. Because the same west wind, which blows almost the whole of the year, and retards the vessels passing by Cape Horn, carries them with rapidity by the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand.

Hence it follows, that, when the Americans quarrel with Spain, perhaps on the subject of the contraband, they will send their ships on the coast of Chili from their establishments in the South Seas, by the latitudes of New Zealand, and with the west winds, which always blow in that quarter. This is a voyage of only five weeks; for Captain Cook in one voyage, and Captain Fourneaux in another, went from New Zealand to Cape Horn in less time, and the journal of the winds, annexed to the Voyage of Captain Cook, shows, that the west winds in those latitudes bear to the east the proportion of ten to one. When their vessels are on the coasts of Chili, they will take the advantage of the land wind, which, blowing constantly from south to north, will carry them along the coasts of Chili and Peru. With this wind they will go in fourteen days to the Bay of Panamá, and in the course of this voyage they will ravage the seacoasts, and make prizes of all the vessels they meet. The naval force of Spain at Lima will not have it in their power to hinder them; for the same south wind, which will push the Americans forward, will prevent the fleets of Spain going to meet them.

From the Bay of Panamá they will return by the great wind of the tropics, which never fails blowing from east to west, either to their settlements in the South Seas, or to sell their prizes in the seas of China or India, from whence they will perhaps again

return with new vessels, newly manned, to repeat their ravages. Their return will either be by New Zealand in coming from the Indies, or by the latitude of forty north in coming from China. In this last case they will fall on Mexico, and, profiting by the land winds, which always blow there from north to the Bay of Panamá, they will ravage Mexico as before they ravaged Chili and Peru. From the Bay of Panamá they will return by the great tropic wind, either to their own homes in the South Seas, or to the seas of Asia to renew a war, insulting, tormenting, and without remedy.

On the other hand, when at war with England, France, Portugal, or Holland, they will direct their course from their establishments in the South Seas, and fall upon the possessions of those powers in the East Indies. They will have two great routes to go and return by; the one to the west of New Zealand, the other by the islands between China and New Holland, and in this they will have as many passages as there are islands. Thence follows the impossibility of waylaying their vessels, either going or on their return. These consequences may all be prevented by the treaty proposed by Lord Rochford, in which it might be stipulated, that these Islands shall for ever belong to their present inhabitants and their posterity; for certainly the nation, who shall first possess herself of them, will command the commerce of the South Seas and those of Asia.

Europe, wishing for the independence of America, resembles a man asleep on ice, and not sensible that ice thaws; and therefore, to give the greater weight to the confederation, Holland and Denmark, who have interests in both the new worlds, might be invited to become contracting parties to those articles of treaty, which regard the mutual guarantee.

The reason of the frequent breach of treaties is, that they are made without provision for the future reciprocal interests of the contracting nations. The only ones that I know of, that pay attention to this object, are the treaties between Portugal and England; by which Portugal gains a preference for the sale of her wines in England, and England for the sale of her cloths in Portugal. The consequence is, that there never has been, and in appearance never will be, a war between Portugal and England. It would not be difficult, either in the general confederation, or by separate treaties of commerce between England on the one part, and the three kingdoms of Spain, Portugal, and France respectively on the other, to advance infinitely the commercial interests of all

three, by their connexions with England. Spain having wines, oil, fruits, salt, fine wools, and some other articles, which England has not; and England having iron, with coal in the same fields for the manufacturing of it, and by the moistness of her climate long wool for cloths of a low price, also tin, fish, with some other articles, which Spain has not; it follows, that when England is rich she will buy more articles of Spain, and when Spain is rich she will buy more articles of England, and consequently, that one cannot enrich herself without enriching the other. The same reasoning applies to the natural connexions between England and Portugal.

There is even a natural connexion between England and France in many articles of commerce, if the jealousy of fools and misinformed persons did not perpetually interrupt it. I have heard from certain authority, that had the Abbé Terray continued in the ministry of France, there would have been a tariff between France and England for the entry, on the most favorable conditions, of the wines and articles of mode of the one nation, and the manufactures of iron and wheat of the other, and England might have procured the consent of Portugal for the diminution of her commerce of wines with England by other indemnifications. England, in favor of France, Spain, and Portugal, might, without injury to herself, even permit the exportation of those wools, paying a duty on the exportation thereof. The exportation of the superfluous wool would be an advantage to the proprietors of lands in England, to the King, in furnishing him a new revenue, and to those three nations, in giving them an article necessary for their manufactures.

Unfortunately for humanity, the Abbé Terray is no more; but, happily for humanity, Dr. Franklin, the Comptroller-General of France, M. Campomanes, the Duke of Braganza, and Lord North are all still living, and the King of Spain, with the Count de Florida Blanca, may put all these five in motion.

For my part, I have no authority from the English ministers to present this project; but, living in friendship with the greater part of them, and on an intimate footing with the others, I am certain, that some of the sentiments in this memorial correspond with their manner of thinking on the subject. I confess, I received a letter in Portugal, fourteen days before my departure for Spain, from Lord Rochford, who is not at present in the ministry, but who is so taken up with a project that does him so much honor, that he has advised me to feel the pulses on the possibility of making it succeed; and that I have a letter on the same subject from the

Duke of Braganza, who entered into the views of my Lord Rochford, not as a politician, but as a friend to humanity.

Encouraged by such men, and still more by the dictates of my own heart, I wrote to one of the English ministers, that, if I did not find minds too much heated, and there was no danger of giving offence, I intended to do justice to the project of my Lord Rochford in Spain and in France, and begged him to send me an answer to Paris, whether the ministry of England approved or disapproved my intentions.

I have only to add, that my views being to unite, and not to separate nations, I have no objection that the ministers of France and Dr. Franklin should each have a copy of this memorial.

END OF VOL. VIII.

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